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**“When You’re Born You Can’t Even Talk, So Everybody Starts
Somewhere”: The Lived Experiences of Sports Leadership
Training**

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BSc (Hons) Sport and Exercise Science

MSc Psychology in Sport

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Thesis presented for the degree of Doctorate in Philosophy

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August 2016

Abstract

The 'power of sport' and its efficacy in personal and social development programmes has often been taken for granted. Despite the growing number of studies which have critically questioned how sport is used in developmental contexts, there has been seemingly little focus placed upon participants' accounts of their sport-for-development experiences. My research explores individuals' *lived* experiences of sports leadership courses, and their descriptions of the social interactions and feelings they encountered, in order to address the lack of experiential data in the current sport-for-development literature. An ethnographic methodology meant that I was immersed within the field. I was positioned as a moderate participant, which enabled me to reflect on my own sports leadership experiences. Data were collected through four sports leadership course observations and cyclical interviews over 4-10 months with eleven course attendees, plus individual interviews with five tutors. I adopted a phenomenologically-inspired perspective, utilising Merleau-Ponty's (1986) concept of the *lived body* to emphasise the corporeal investments involved in such physically-oriented courses. Goffman's (1959) *presentation of the self* and Hochschild's (1979) *emotion management* were also applied to an exploration of individuals' investment of self during their participation. My reflections from the field highlighted the wide variety of course locations, deliveries, participants, motivations, and tutors involved in sports leadership courses. The *social* and *embodied* aspects of the courses emerge as key influences upon individuals' experiences, with the opportunity to learn *intercorporeally* becoming apparent as vital to individuals' motivations and engagements. The crucial points of connection and disconnection individuals experienced can be thus understood through their descriptions of *confidence*, which encapsulates their mind-body-world relationships with the

course. Therefore, this study is important in understanding the role of sport in sport-for-development courses, as it discusses how the physical elements of such courses provide a chance for individuals to invest their embodied selves into a personal development opportunity.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my Grandfather, who sadly passed away during my doctoral studies. I will forever hold him as the greatest example of how a person should be in helping others, pursuing knowledge, and living authentically. I would like to thank all my family for their continued support, both emotionally and financially. Mum, Dad, Viki, John, Jane, and the rest; I hope I can pay you all back in the future (emotionally at least). I would also like to thank my supervision team of Ben Oakley, Prof Kath Woodward, Dr Christine Wise, and Dr Helen Owton for their input, interrogations, and insights. Our meetings over the years have been invaluable to me, and without them I would no doubt still be confused about where I am and what I am supposed to be doing. There are far too many individuals to single out who have also been of tremendous help to me throughout my studies, but a few deserve special mentions; Anne Foward, whose organisational skills saved me several times; Linda at Sports Leaders UK, whose faith I hope I have repaid; Farah, whose help during data collection was priceless; Sue, and her training workshops; fellow students at the OU, in particular Matt, Dan, Alex, Subhi, Jenny, and Sarah-Jane, for helping to keep me sane; and my friends, in particular Glenn, Dav, Eddie, Steph, and James, for reminding me that there is an outside world. Finally, I would like to thank my girlfriend, Mary, who has tolerated my various mood swings and outbursts during these thesis years. There is no doubt that I could not have survived the PhD without you and your support, even if you still do not understand what I am doing!

Publications and Dissemination

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Scott, D. (2015) The quest for confidence: sports leadership training and its impact on individuals. *Journal of Sports Management and Commercialization*, 6(1), 13-23.

Paper Presentations

Scott, D. (2016) "Once they'd pushed me out of my boundaries I was like, oh, it's not too bad, I might as well stay here!": A phenomenology of sport-for-development. *Leisure Studies Association Conference*, Liverpool, United Kingdom, 5th – 7th July.

Scott, D. (2014) The quest for confidence: sports leadership training and its impact on individuals. *Fifth International Conference on Sport and Society*, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 16th – 17th July.

Scott, D. (2014) Sport-for-Development: a fleeting fancy or confidence catalyst? *Leisure Studies Association Conference*, Glasgow, United Kingdom, 7th – 9th July.

Poster Presentations

Scott, D. (2015) Sport, development and identity: the impact of sport-for-development. *8th Annual Life Beyond the PhD Conference*, Windsor, United Kingdom, 15th – 18th August.

Scott, D. (2013) The significance of sports leadership training on personal and professional identity. *Fourth International Conference on Sport and Society*, Chicago, USA, 13th – 15th June.

Guest Lectures

Scott, D. (2013) *Sport, Identities, and Existentialism*. Bournemouth University, 13th November.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Thesis

Sports have the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, the power to unite people in a way that little else does. [...] Sports can create hope, where there was once only despair. (Mandela, 2000)

The 'power of sport' is playing an ever more prominent role within society. Within the last fifty years the government in the United Kingdom has taken a greater interest in the way sport is delivered, with the supposed benefits of sport being applied within an increasing number of contexts (Coalter, 2007). The publication of "Game Plan" (DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002) by the New Labour government (in power between 1997-2010) is an example of a document which articulates the various benefits that sport is seen to have; evolving from a leisure activity pre-1970s to a tool that has wider social implications. Indeed, sport is used as a tool to achieve more than just health and fitness aims. For example, "Game Plan" argues sport can have positive implications for education, leadership, confidence, communication, building communities, and combatting social exclusion and crime reduction (Fraser-Thomas *et al*, 2005). The use of sport in wider settings such as these is specifically cited as the most effective method for engaging socially vulnerable young people in activities that go far beyond leisure, with opportunities for education, training, and community involvement being apparent (Feinstein *et al*, 2005; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014; Spaaij, 2009). Not only does sport in the UK get used in this way, but also non-sports organisations and services increasingly employ sport around the world for developmental purposes. For example, the United Nations officially recognised sport as one way in which countries can achieve their economic, social, political, and health-related development goals (UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2003). The field of sport-for-development is now recognised and established in its own right, with a plethora of educational and

developmental opportunities being offered globally by various course providers (e.g. Laureus Sport for Good Foundation).

Despite sport appearing to be such fertile ground for social and personal development, there is little in the way of critical evidence to support that this is the case. According to Adams and Harris (2014), the alleged developmental benefits of sport stem from popular beliefs based predominantly upon anecdotal and practitioner-produced evidence. Additionally, Houlihan and colleagues (2009) argue that sports evangelists so frequently proselytize these beliefs, it seems that they have become “deeply entrenched storylines” (p. 5) within society, which can be seen in the opening quote from Nelson Mandela. This is not to say that the claims are necessarily untrue, but rather there is a discrepancy between the intensity of the claimed benefits of sport and the amount of critical and credible research which supports them (Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014; Houlihan *et al*, 2009). While the majority of research in the area identifies positive outcomes from sport-for-development training courses (e.g. Coalter, 2013; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2013), there is a focus on simple casual relationships and a lack of self-critique regarding how and/or why these outcomes occur. Furthermore, much of sport-for-development research has focused upon profiling the participants through quantitative research, reducing them to motivational attributes, and restricting their voices to reactionary responses immediately after participating with the course (e.g. Burnett, 2014; Eley & Kirk, 2002; Long, 2008). Research into the participants’ course experiences seems to be investigated in isolation from their everyday lives, with research that focuses on participants’ holistic experiences worryingly sparse. This has led to Nicholls and colleagues (2010) arguing that much of sport-for-development evidence can be described as a “lack of evidence discourse” (p. 249). This argument is exemplified by several researchers calling for more critical and participant-focused

investigations into the role sport can play in development, and the monitoring and evaluation of sport-for-development courses (Chamberlain, 2013; Coalter, 2007, 2010; Coakley, 2011; Draper & Coalter, 2016; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Kay, 2009; Smith & Leach, 2010; Strachan & Davies, 2014). This thesis responds to the calls for more critical and participant-focused research, and provides an important step towards understanding what influence the use of sport as a tool in personal and social development programmes has on individuals' course experiences and engagement.

In order to address these concerns, I argue that focusing on individuals' experiences of their course participation can lead to a fuller, more rounded view of what sport-for-development courses are and the influences they have on participants. My investigation aims to provide further insights into:

- The personal experiences of those involved in sport-for-development courses (i.e. the participants and the tutors)
- How participants are able to make points of connection and disconnection with sport-for-development courses
- How sport-for-development courses fit into participants' everyday lives

Such an enquiry allows for greater understanding regarding the personal impacts of the courses, as it enables participants to describe their experiences in their own words. My study, therefore, investigates sport-for-development courses from the participants' points of view, and examines how they experience the courses in relation to their everyday lives. Such an exploration might help to identify possible longer term influences from the sport-for-development programme than most previous sport-for-development investigations, as individuals are engaged in a cyclical interview process up to 11 months after completing the course. This

provides an important element towards gaining individuals' understandings of their sport-for-development experiences, and goes beyond the typical reactionary responses after their immediate participation with such courses, which much of the sport-for-development literature relies on (as will be discussed in Chapter 2)..

1.1 Definition of key terms and concepts

1.1.1 Sport-for-development

Sport-for-development refers to the intentional use of sport in order to achieve developmental goals. These goals can refer to *social development*, *personal development*, or both (these are elaborated on in section 1.1.3). The ways in which sport is used on sport-for-development programmes can be described as being either a Sport Plus or Plus Sport approach in the recruitment, teaching, and rewarding aspects of their programme (Coalter, 2007). A Sport Plus approach focuses on traditional sporting ideals, such as increasing participation, encouraging teamwork, and improving sporting knowledge and skills, but with additional activities that aim to inform participants of other information that can be used within their wider lives. Conversely, a Plus Sport approach uses sport as a motivational or rewarding tool to those who participate within their primary activities, which are typically centred on promoting the organisation's own agenda. Although the boundaries between each approach can be difficult to define, both involve using sport to attract, develop, and educate individuals, with the aim of providing them with the skills and attributes to develop as an individual and contribute positively towards society. Within the context of my study, the sports leadership training provided by Sports Leaders UK is predominantly a Sport Plus approach, although elements of a Plus Sport approach also exist.

1.1.2 Sports leadership training and Sports Leaders UK

Sports leadership training is included amongst the plethora of programmes more commonly known in the literature as sport-for-development¹. Sports Leaders UK are one of the largest sport-for-development providers in the United Kingdom, with around 200,000 people engaging with their awards and qualifications every year (Sports Leaders UK, 2010). The sports leadership course they offer is an example of an educational sport-for-development initiative, with opportunities for learning and a formally recognised qualification being offered to aid personal development. Individuals typically engage with the sports leadership course to learn how to lead physical activity sessions, gain a formal qualification, and find new volunteering and employment opportunities. Educationally-oriented sport-for-development courses, such as sports leadership courses, tend to offer basic sports provision, including equipment, venues, and personnel, in order to foster personal development through educational opportunities, such as literacy and numeracy classes or after-school homework clubs (Coalter, 2010).

The origins of Sports Leaders UK can be traced back to 1982, when the Central Council for Physical Recreation (CCPR; now named the Sport and Recreation Alliance) adopted the role of an independent, representative body for recreation and governing bodies of sport (Coughlan & Webb, 1990). Through their work of encouraging participation in sport, particularly amongst young people, the Community Sports Leadership Award (CSLA) was launched by the CCPR in 1981 (Lawson, 1994). Following continued growth throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the British Sports Trust re-branded itself in 2004 as Sports Leaders UK, in order to

¹ The terms “sport-in-development” and “sport-for-change” are also used in some places in the literature, and are seemingly interchangeable with “sport-for-development”.

display itself as a leadership training provider. Sports Leaders UK has continued to grow as an organisation, and currently has several awards and qualifications on offer to the public. The qualifications were placed on the Qualifications and Credit Framework in 2010, meaning that they are now nationally recognised and able to be taught within academic institutions (Sports Leaders UK, 2014).

1.1.3 Social and personal development

The complexity of the word *development* is often overlooked, perhaps due to its 'buzzword' status amongst policy and government circles (Bauer, 2012). However, development can mean different things within different contexts. For example, a philosophical understanding of development can refer to the progress of humans over centuries, whereas a practical understanding can relate to the social engineering of emerging nations (Esteva, 1992; McMichael, 2004). In the social sciences, there are also different ways in which the term development can be used within related disciplines. For instance, psychologists may refer to the development of an individual in different ways; as a psychoanalyst could discuss the development of the id, ego, or super ego, whereas a cognitive-behaviourist might frame development more in terms of an individual attaining specific goals. In this research, I use the term development in the two main ways that much sociological research tends to (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Sen, 1999); *personal development* and *social development*.

Personal development typically consists of growth and progression through various life stages in an attempt by an individual to reach their preferred self. This view of development is often linked with discourses surrounding identity, citizenship, and skills attainment (Foster, 2006; Kahn, 1990; Sen, 1999). *Social development* refers to larger regional, national, and international policies that set out 'blueprints' to help

disadvantaged populations through social, political, economic, educational, and material change (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Peet, 1999). These definitions provide some general guidance as to what is meant by development, although sport-for-development providers may also state their own specific development aims. For national sport-for-development providers, such as Sports Leaders UK, their explicit aims are typically more associated with personal development characteristics of self-confidence, competence, or self-efficacy (see appendix A for further discussion). International sport-for-development bodies, such as those aligned to the Sport for Development and Peace initiative, tend to focus on more social development aims such as community building, local regeneration, and peaceful interventions (Kidd, 2008).

1.2 Background to the research problem

There appears to be a disparity between the popularity of sport-for-development courses and the amount of critical evidence that underpins their use. Although there is a growing corpus surrounding the role of sport in development, which demonstrates greater evaluation and critique of the field (e.g. Coalter, 2013; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), there is, however, still insufficient understanding of the participants' experiences of sport-for-development courses and their resulting impacts. The few studies which focus upon the influence of the courses on the participants' lives contain several shortcomings. These include the use of short term, or 'one-hit', methods that only provide responses from participants immediately after (and sometimes during) the sport-for-development courses. This approach leads to little understanding of the lasting implications of participation with such courses, and as such only provides superficial results, which is discussed further in the review of literature in Chapter 2.

Another shortcoming of the previous literature is the over reliance on similar approaches. For example, the use of social and cultural capital theory (Bourdieu, 1977) is a popular recourse for investigations into the implications of sport-for-development participation (e.g. Kay & Bradbury, 2009; Peachey *et al*, 2011; Spaaij, 2012). While it provides insight into the social and cultural connections (or *capital*) and opportunities that are available to participants, an overreliance on one particular theory risks limiting understanding regarding the phenomena of sport-for-development in greater depth. The key emotional and corporeal development opportunities which might occur on the course from the participants' perspectives have yet to be explored, as well as the subtleties and nuances which exist within their experiences. This could be one of the reasons why the sport-for-development literature is currently limited regarding how the course experiences are utilised by participants within their everyday lives.

To address these gaps, I adopt a phenomenologically-inspired approach for my investigation into sport-for-development. Via this approach, my investigation explores individuals' identities and their sense of development. The ways in which individuals experience the course through their *lived body* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986), and their mind-body-world engagement of the course, is explored by fore-fronting the participants' voices regarding their sport-for-development experiences throughout my research. I positioned myself as a 'moderate participant' (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010) during the ethnography, so that I could immerse myself into the sport-for-development field during the research by being in "the space between" (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009); both an insider and outsider. Such an approach enabled me to engage socially with the course attendees to build up trust and rapport, while also maintaining enough distance to note and query the delivery of the courses. This allowed me to understand further the processes involved in experiencing a sport-

for-development course as a moderate participant and observe participants' embodied experiences of the course. Interviews with the course attendees after the course, and multiple follow up interviews which took place over 4-10 months after the course had finished, meaning my study sought a more holistic view of participants' sport-for-development experiences than has previously been provided. By attaining an overview of the participants' wider lives, it becomes easier to assess how the course fits into their everyday lives, and draws out any influences the course may have upon individuals' performances of their identities.

The origins of this study are rooted in my Master of Research dissertation, which investigated the tutor training process run by Sports Leaders UK (Scott, 2011). My Master's research shed new light on how the trainee tutor understood their tutor training in relation to their motivations and identities, and highlighted contextual influences upon the delivery of their training. The present study was also informed by a Foucauldian deconstructive discourse analysis of the Sports Leaders UK website, and a comparison with other sport-for-development providers, which can be seen in appendix A. The sport-for-development courses investigated in my study are sports leadership courses run by Sports Leaders UK (see section 1.1.2 for more details). The entry procedure for each sports leadership course is dependent upon how the course is being used, as it often forms part of a larger qualification or social development programme. For example, in this study the course at Pencey FE College was part of students' first year Uniformed Public Services (UPS) qualification, meaning the course attendees were obligated to complete the sports leadership course as part of their academic studies. My research provides a unique opportunity for Sports Leaders UK to gain an independent and qualitative evaluation into how their courses are run and received. I consider myself independent of the charity organisation, despite their joint funding of my PhD studentship. The purpose

of my research is not to justify Sports Leaders UK's investment in their body of programmes, or to seek and promote any positive or negative outcomes. Instead, I aim to explore the participants' experiences in order to provide critical academic discussion about the influence of sport-for-development on individuals' lives. I understand that the source of funding for my research could lead to possible bias within my thesis if not carefully addressed and considered. However, I am not motivated by Sports Leaders UK's funding, or even the Open University's funding, but by my own growth as a researcher with an intellectual curiosity regarding the influence of sport on individuals' lives. In this specific instance, I investigated this influence through exploring individuals' engagements with sport-for-development courses and the subsequent influence these have within their lives. While there have been previous investigations into the results of sports leadership training, and greater efforts towards evaluation are starting to take place (e.g. Mawson, 2012), the majority of these rely upon quantitative methods (e.g. Eley & Kirk, 2002).

1.3 Research aims and questions

The main aim of this research is to explore sport-for-development courses from the participants' perspectives. This is in response to the limited literature regarding the participants' voices in exploring the influences of sport-for-development course attendance. Also, I aim to employ a phenomenologically-inspired approach, which explores participants' embodied understandings of their sport-for-development experiences. Gaining further understanding of participants' experiences sheds light on to the processes, opportunities, and relationships involved during the courses. To address these aims, I pose the following research questions:

- How can individuals' experiences of sports leadership courses and their relationship with the course content be understood?

- How do individuals' varying levels of engagement with the course content influence how they might understand their identity?
- Why might individuals' sports leadership experiences influence how they might make sense of their identity after participating with the course?

1.4 Biography, bracketing, and reflections of the researcher

The research is located within a phenomenologically-inspired framework, which means that importance is placed upon the researcher's own position within the research environment. Although there is no one way of demonstrating how this reflection takes place, guidance is provided within the philosophy of phenomenology by the rule of *epochē* and the process of bracketing (Husserl, 1983, pp. 60-61). This involves the researcher acknowledging their own beliefs and influences within the research area, with the aim of reducing their potential bias in order to gain a more objective account of the phenomena in question (Spinelli, 1996). Notions of full *epochē* and pure objectivity are problematized within existential-phenomenology, and it is accepted that it is never possible to fully remove one's own personal biases from the research, due to the ever-present interrelationship between subjectivity and objectivity (Nesti, 2004; I discuss these key elements of phenomenology further in section 4.2). However, by engaging with some form of bracketing and reflection, the researcher indicates they have strived to address the rule of *epochē* and recognises the importance of self-reflection. This process involves acknowledging my own past experiences in order to situate them in relation to the phenomena being studied. In this vein, what follows is a brief insight into my personal experiences with sport. It is important to recognise my own experiences of sport and sport-for-development courses include affective and embodied experiences. The existing sport-for-development literature does not explore the relationship between emotional and corporeal aspects of sport participation. Based on my own experiences, and drawing

from other literatures such as embodied approaches to sport (as discussed in Chapter 2), I feel this is a gap in the current sport-for-development literature which I seek to address with my methodological approach.

I was born in York, United Kingdom in 1987 and grew up in the surrounding area. During my school years, I regularly participated in sport, in particular football, as often as possible. I also dedicated a large portion of my time to watching as many sports on television as frequently as I could, which developed my particular allegiances to several teams such as Liverpool Football Club, Williams Formula 1 Team, and Yorkshire Cricket Club. My love for the world of sport continued through college and university, where I frequently played on football and volleyball teams at a local level. My undergraduate degree in sport and exercise science introduced me to the world of sport psychology, which fascinated me enough to pursue it at Master's level. Although I continue to engage with sport at an academic level, I have not participated in any form of sports coaching or development courses. My reasons for this possibly stem from my sporting experiences during adolescence within school and at external sports clubs and camps, where my gangly physical appearance and lack of natural ability was fertile ground for bullying. Instead, I tended to limit my sporting encounters to people I already knew and felt comfortable around.

My identity feels very bound up with sport, and I place a great deal of importance upon it within my everyday life. However, the nature of this relationship has changed somewhat over time. While growing up I could have been described as a sporting zealot, as I saw the power of sport to do good as an undeniable truth, despite my own somewhat contradictory experiences. My academic studies have refined this view, particularly during my MSc psychology in sport degree, leading me to cast a

more critical eye on the role sport plays in society, how sport can be used as a governmental tool for placation and control, and the meanings individuals place upon sport in relation to their personal lives. These personal puzzles have culminated in this thesis, and they continue to motivate and confuse me in equal measures.

In addition to the process of bracketing prior to the research, it also seems appropriate to reflect upon the role I assumed during the data collection of the research. While a more thorough discussion about my level of participation during the observations of the sports leadership courses is provided in section 4.3.2, there are a couple of pertinent reflections of relevance to this introduction. On several occasions, it became apparent that the course participants seemed to view me as an 'expert' regarding the course materials, and I was often asked questions and for advice. During these encounters, I tried to remain neutral and encouraged the participants to come up with solutions themselves, although I did contribute on occasion as I was part of the discussion group. Overall, I attempted to cast myself as an independent researcher who was separate from both Sports Leaders UK and the participants, although it felt I was viewed more as an ally of Sports Leaders UK and their tutors. However, it is important to note I did not engage with any Sports Leaders UK materials prior to embarking upon the MRes dissertation which preceded this research.

Another occasion worthy of initial reflection occurred during discussions about careers in sport, where I was often referred to as both a positive and negative example of the difficulties in gaining employment in the area. While some participants viewed my continued engagement with sport at university level as an aspirational prospect, there seemed to be others who saw it as an example of how

few jobs there were at the time, which appeared to motivate people to go back to university and study for further qualifications instead. This provided me with an indication as to people's views on employment during an economic recession, as well as people's attitudes to university degrees and students such as me.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

My thesis is divided into two main sections. The first part of my thesis considers the theoretical literature regarding how my research questions can be addressed, including explorations of sport-for-development, phenomenologically-inspired approaches, and methodologies. The second section contains the findings from my data collection and analysis, with key themes about the phenomena of individuals' sports leadership training experiences, such as their social interactions and opportunities to engage personally with their learning, being discussed.

Chapter 2 is the review of literature, which initially focuses on the content and approaches of the sport-for-development literature to date. Then, I delve into the qualitative research approaches which have been utilised within sport-for-development in more depth, and query why studies which centre on individuals' personal development appear to be scant. I close the chapter by exploring literatures outside sport-for-development which could potentially address the lack of attention to personal development.

The theoretical literature follows Chapter 2, which frames my research analytically. In Chapter 3 I begin by discussing how individuals' identities might be explored, and draw on the symbolic interactionist literature. I consider Blumer's (1969) principles of symbolic interactionism, as well as Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical metaphor and Hochschild's *emotion work* (1979; 1983). Then I move on to discuss more

phenomenologically-inspired literatures which also contribute to my analytical lens, for example Merleau-Ponty's (1986) *lived body*, Csíkszentmihályi's (1990) concept of *flow*, and Leder's (1990b) work on the *dys-appearing body*.

Methodological considerations for this study are outlined in Chapter 4. I start with a brief discussion of my paradigmatic position, before providing an overview of the philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology and ethnography. I reflect on my position as an ethnographer in the research in more depth, before detailing my methods of data collection and analysis.

Chapter 5 is the start of the second section of the thesis, and is the first results chapter. Here, I consider the characteristics of the geographical location of my research, and outline my own experiences of being in the field of research. I reflect upon my relationships with the research participants, and end by considering the noticeable themes which emerge from my observations.

Chapter 6 presents the findings of the interviewees' sports leadership experiences. The key aspects of the courses which seemed to be important to the course attendees are discussed, which mainly concerned their *social interactions* and *physical engagement* opportunities during the course. The discussions about individuals' experiences on the course provide indication as to the main points of connection and disconnection which arose.

Chapter 7 considers the interviewees' experiences of any personal change or growth they may have felt following the course; in essence, any sense of *personal development* they might have gained. This was explored in relation to three main themes which appeared to effect individuals' understandings of the influence of the

course, which are *personal engagement*, *personal disengagement*, and *confidence*. In particular, individuals' experiences of *confidence* alluded to a new understanding of how course attendees' engagements with sports leadership courses might develop their sense of self.

Chapter 8 is the conclusions Chapter, and brings together the findings from the results chapters. The research questions set out in the first chapter are addressed, before the implications of my findings are considered in terms of their theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions. I end by reflecting on the research process in terms of how it may have been improved, the questions raised by it, and how it has influenced me personally.

1.6 Summary of introduction

In this chapter, I have identified the increased use of sport for developmental purposes as being unsupported in its effects by critical evidence. I defined the key terms which will be used in my thesis regarding sport-for-development. Further background to the research problem was then considered, which included the methodological limitations of the current sport-for-development corpus. This led into my research aims and questions which guide my investigations and will be addressed in my conclusions chapter. I then provided my own personal background and initial reflections relating to my research, and then finished with an outline of how my thesis is structured.

The use of sport within social and personal development programmes has become popular practice worldwide, despite the lack of critical research pertaining to the impact of sport-for-development courses on individuals' wider lives. I argue that the absence of the participants' voices in the assessment of sport-for-development

course impacts is misleading, as it overlooks their experiences and contributes to the “lack of evidence discourse”, as identified by Nicholls and colleagues (2010 p. 249). My self-reflections regarding my own relationship with sport and identity allude to affective and embodied elements, which have not yet been explored in the sport-for-development literature. My research questions are aimed towards exploring these discrepancies, and investigating whether participating on a sport-for-development course can influence individuals’ identities and change their lives, as is claimed by the sport-for-development rhetoric. In the next chapter I review the existing body of literature regarding sport-for-development, and query the ways in which it has been investigated to date.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Literature is to be exegeted, as if it were a kind of puzzle [...], My God, to read without joy is stupid. (Williams, 2012, p. xv)

The purpose of this chapter, as the quote suggests, is to interpret the puzzle that underpins the current literature concerning the key areas of my thesis. As identified in the first chapter, sports leadership training is a form of what is commonly known in the research literature as sport-for-development. This term encapsulates the social enterprise programmes that utilise sport as a delivery mechanism for developmental and educational purposes. The rationale behind sport-for-development courses stems from a desire to address a wide range of health, education, and personal development agendas, with the belief that sport is central in working towards a solution in tackling these issues, which I discuss in the following section.

These understandings are critiqued within this chapter, with attention given to the underlying beliefs surrounding the 'power of sport', and how existing monitoring and evaluation practices may not be sufficient in substantiating these claims. Qualitative research approaches which explore individuals' experiences are discussed as potential alternatives to the prevalent quantitative measures in exploring the effectiveness of sport-for-development. Further sections in this chapter address theoretical perspectives and substantive research around the key theme of personal development, and how individuals might perceive any effects arising from the sports leadership course. Firstly, the current corpus of sport-for-development literature is examined, with a focus on the utilisation, effects, and impacts established to date.

2.1 Contextualising sport-for-development

2.1.1 Developing sport-for-development

As briefly introduced within the first chapter, the deployment and investment in sport-for-development programmes at both national and international levels has accelerated greatly throughout the 1990s. Interest in sport-for-development has seemingly yet to plateau, with sport officially being recognised as a tool to help countries achieve their economic, social, political, and health-related development goals by the United Nations (UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Sport for Development and Peace, 2003). The promotion of sport as a means to develop individuals and communities within the United Kingdom rose to greater prominence under the New Labour government of the late 1990s, as more sports-based programmes came into existence with the aim of tackling anti-social behaviour, social exclusion, and crime-rates amongst at-risk youths (Coalter, 2013).

The rationale underpinning the centrality of sport in these programmes is often cited as providing a platform for individuals to develop their moral character, reform vulnerable individuals, teach lessons for life, stimulate interest in the local community, and reinvigorate civic engagement (e.g. Burnett, 2009; Morris *et al*, 2004, President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, 2006; Sandford *et al*, 2006). However, these promises can be vague and inflated (Coalter, 2015), and are often claimed as truisms by those described by Giulianotti (2004) as 'sport evangelists'. These views are informed by idealised testimonials, anecdotal evidence from former and current athletes (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011), and as Coakley (2011) describes, "the rhetoric of sports evangelists can be viewed as "unquestioned beliefs grounded in wishful thinking"" (p.307). Rather than seek to critique claims and pursue robust evidence-based research, acolytes of the 'power

of sport' view research as reaffirmation of their own beliefs (Coakley, 2015). Given this, there appears to be a risk of overselling (or underselling) the positive effects sport can have on individuals. Instead, it seems more appropriate to question the routinely held view that sport contributes positively towards personal and social development. I now move on to examine the existing research which questions these popular perceptions of the positive effects of sport.

2.1.2 Questioning the 'power of sport'

Coakley (2011) identifies three categories which characterise the popular perceptions of the role sport plays in development amongst all the claims made by 'sport evangelists', particularly regarding youth sport:

- The 'fertiliser' effect, which posits that sport enhances motor skills, physical fitness, wellbeing, self-confidence, teamwork, and discipline. These characteristics are then absorbed by the individual and used in everyday life, providing a better-rounded and socially desirable person.
- The 'car wash' effect, which is centred on reforming those who are identified as 'at-risk'. The rationale is that sport provides structure, goals, secure environments, and positive role models, which are able to cleanse and wash away a deviant's anti-social character.
- The 'guardian angel' effect, which postulates that the social networks, relationships, and guidance that sport fosters will lead individuals to personal success and community engagement.

To justify investment in sport-for-development programmes, Governments with a neoliberal ideology commonly use these claims regarding sport's ability to cultivate personal development. These claims have also been identified as influencing policy surrounding issues of health, crime, and social exclusion (Coakley, 2011; Darnell, 2010; Kay, 2009). The crux of these claims is that sport provides lifelong lessons,

personal and interpersonal skills, and positive experiences to the individual that transcends mere participation in the sport itself. Policy makers argue that if these are integrated into the lives of individuals who are socially excluded, sport-for-development participation can change their personal and professional opportunities for the better. For example, Hoye and colleagues (2010) state that sport is used in policies outside of the sport industry in order to achieve wider societal and governmental aims, such as those relating to social inclusion. The main reasons for using sport as a vehicle in this way are summed up by Houlihan and colleagues in the following quote:

Governments tend to treat sport in an extremely instrumental manner, seeing it as a highly malleable and visible, but relatively low cost response, to a number of non-sport problems ranging from nation building to social welfare. (2009, p.5)

These prevalent beliefs from governments and policy makers regarding the power, ease of use, and cost-effectiveness of sport seem to have resulted in a multitude of sports-based initiatives which target wider social impacts, including the establishment of Sports Leaders UK. The result has seen a significant investment from numerous sources, including governments, charities, and corporations, in the establishment of a plethora of sports-based initiatives designed to tackle social issues (e.g. StreetGames in the United Kingdom, and the Laureus Sport for Good Foundation internationally).

The justification of this investment is further argued by the use of sport as a 'hook' (Feinstein *et al*, 2005; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Scheerder *et al*, 2011) in attracting recruitment amongst the relevant population. Sport has been shown to be successful in attracting those who have been disaffected and marginalised by society, meaning that sport-for-development programmes are typically more

successful at recruiting and retaining 'at-risk' populations than other initiatives (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). Additionally, sports based programmes are able to attract more young people than other youth movements (Feinstein *et al*, 2005; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014; Scheerder *et al*, 2011), and attracts more volunteers of all ages (Gaskin, 2004; Low *et al*, 2007; Taylor *et al*, 2003). This apparent 'power of sport' is also evident in its regulatory uses in social order and social dynamics (Giulianotti, 2016). For instance, Birrell (1981) discussed how sport bears comparison to religious ritualistic events due to society's desire to interact with social figures capable of achieving meaningful values such as courage, gameness and integrity, which thus renders sport an important social phenomenon for many. Additionally, O'Neil (2004) explored the social interactions of football fans and the varying impressions different police teams present, which were considered to influence supporters (dis)orderly behaviours through their constant negotiations of the social context. In these examples the culture of sport has transcended into an intangible power which heavily influences large groups of individuals, therefore demonstrating how individuals can possess deeply personal, emotional, and even irrational connections with sport.

As noted by several researchers (e.g. Coakley, 2011; Coalter, 2013; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Kay & Bradbury, 2009; Nichols, 2007) the beliefs regarding the power of sport are not borne out of research, but rather from speculation and anecdotes. Despite the vast number of sport-for-development programmes in existence, there is little in the way of critically evaluating the processes, practices, and medium-to-long term results from participation. As such, there is a distinct lack of evidence to justify the claims of sport-for-development participation as being unquestionably positive for individuals (Nicholls *et al*, 2010). This phenomenologically-inspired

investigation therefore seeks to query how ‘the power of sport’ might influence individuals’ sports leadership experiences and shape their lifeworld².

2.1.3 Monitoring and evaluation of sport-for-development

Monitoring and evaluation of sport-for-development has become more evident over the last decade, which has resulted in a greater drive towards identifying inputs, outputs, and outcomes (e.g. Coalter, 2007; Levermore, 2011). These attempts, however, have been criticised as being overly quantitative in their approach (Kay, 2009) and narrow in focus as to which aspects of courses can be evaluated (Lindsey & Grattan, 2012). The sequential processes of these evaluations seem to fail to capture individuals’ personal experiences of the courses. As such, they may overlook the intangible effects of sport-for-development (e.g. a sense of belonging within the community) within an individual’s lifeworld.

Additionally, Adams and Harris (2014) raise concerns about *who* conducts monitoring and evaluation, as the majority of studies “are commissioned by funders for external interest groups to bid for [...] because funding organisations rely more on the support of external stakeholders than their actual performance for their legitimacy” (p.143-144)³. Such approaches lead to inconsistent monitoring, possible biases, and results producing inconsistent knowledge, which is haphazardly synthesised and shared amongst stakeholders and sport-for-development organisations (Adams & Harris, 2014). This insight has led me to reflect on my position in this research, given that Sports Leaders UK provided half of the

² Lifeworld in the phenomenological sense refers to the collective experience of what individuals perceive as the world (Husserl, 1970). This involves not just an individual’s own beliefs and meanings, but are the intersubjective perceptions of understandings about the Universe (Husserl, 1970).

³ It is noted that academic institutions are also identified as major monitoring and evaluation contributors by Adams and Harris (2014), but that academic knowledge is typically overlooked by practitioners.

studentship funding for this study (see sections 1.2, 1.4, and 4.3.3 for further reflections).

The criticisms surrounding the current evidence base for sport-for-development conjure the metaphor of the well-trodden path; the drive for funding support into sport-for-development agencies has resulted in too many short-term evaluations which produce anecdotal, indicative, and unsubstantiated results (Collins *et al*, 1999; Kay, 2009; Long & Sanderson, 2002). As Sugden (2015) vividly describes, these issues create:

A new orthodoxy that dominates the SDP (Sport for Development and Peace) sector and is reinforced by corporate carpetbaggers and their allies in international government and non-government agencies and sport governing bodies whose preening and posturing leaders and their fawning apparatchiks occupy the commanding heights of the SDP governing architecture. Here, they frequently use the evangelical and philanthropic rhetoric of SDP and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) to mask their shameless profiteering and vainglorious power brokerage.

(p.607)

In essence, concern is expressed that without more critical research, sport-for-development will be stuck in a self-perpetuating cycle of blind faith in sports development powers being sustained through continued unquestioned funding support. Coalter (2007) ascribes the lack of a critical evidence base to four main reasons: conceptual weaknesses of sport-for-development programmes, methodological weakness in evaluations, insufficient consideration for satisfactory conditions, and the limitations arising from a dearth of published materials from which to draw upon. The purpose of this project is aimed at addressing this lack of critical research, and to reveal a more holistic picture of individuals lived experiences of sport-for-development courses.

2.1.4 Background of sport-for-development summary

From the analysis of the literature, it seems clear that there is a need to address some of the issues discussed in order to gain greater understanding of *how* sport-for-development works from different perspectives; not just from the funder's viewpoint, but also from the tutors and, most crucially, the participants' voices. By engaging in a deeper qualitative exploration of sport-for-development, the participants' views and experiences could contribute towards a more rounded view of the effect sport-for-development can have upon society. This perspective forms one of my research questions outlined in Chapter 1:

How can individuals' experiences of sports leadership courses and their relationship with the course content be understood?

The dominance of quantitative monitoring and evaluation studies has led to increased qualitative examination of sport-for-development from the academic community, which is explored in the next section.

2.2 Qualitative research into sport-for-development

2.2.1 Defining effectiveness in sport-for-development

Researchers have argued for the inclusion of various indicators of development to determine effectiveness within sport-for-development. For example, in their report on overcoming barriers to participation in females, Kane and La Voi (2007) argued that development can occur through changes in critical awareness and social action amongst participants. Additionally, Gambone and colleagues (2006) identified participants' ability to understand their individual potential in contributing to the public arena as one of the most important indicators of effectiveness through a comparative study of youth development programmes. Gambone and colleagues suggest that engagement with civic responsibilities, community awareness, and

contributing to social change leads to greater development of leadership, organisation, and decision making skills in participants. Gambone and colleagues' study reaffirms a point of discussion which other researchers have also addressed (e.g. Christens & Dolan, 2011; Coakley, 2011; Jennings *et al*, 2006), which is to consider the effectiveness of sport-for-development in terms of both individual *and* social developments. Rather than viewing the impacts of sport-for-development programmes as a series of individual or social outputs, as many funding body evaluations do (e.g. Sport England, cited in Adams & Harris, 2014), it is instead argued by the aforementioned researchers that effectiveness should be examined in relation to the programmes' ability to "weave together youth development, community development, and social change into a unified organising cycle" (Christens & Dolan, 2011; p.528). Coakley (2011) argues that research into the effectiveness of sport-for-development programmes should investigate how sport may be able to empower young people in terms of their local community and potential wider social impact. According to Coakley, the civic engagement of participants is considered key, as it indicates that individuals receive substantive support and opportunities to engage in building their capacity to engage with a wider social network. Arguably, sport-for-development schemes, therefore, might be judged in terms of their effectiveness by how they encourage individuals personally to engage with the course materials, and consequently reflect on how their learning can relate to their own lives and local community. It is in this vein that I consider the influence of individuals' engagement with the sports leadership courses upon their sense of self within my study, which is reflected in my second research question from Chapter 1:

How do individuals' varying levels of engagement with the course content influence how they might understand their identity?

Therefore, I investigate the influence of the programmes in relation to various individual and social facets from the individual's perspective.

In their review of 175 different courses which targeted at-risk youths, Morris and colleagues (2004) concluded that it is not the type of activity provided which effectuates change, but instead any change experienced is because there is an activity at all. Morris and colleagues continue that it is the social networks and interactions in the *learning context* of the courses which instigate deeper understanding of the material, an argument supported by Pawson and Tilley's (2004) realist evaluation. Coalter (2013) surmises that social interventions work "by enabling participants to make different choices [...] the making and sustaining of different choices requires a change in participants' reasoning [...] and/or resources [...] they have available to them" (p. 3). He argues that instead of focusing on families of programmes, such as sport-for-development, greater understanding of the processes, experiences, and relationships come through analysing the mechanisms that an individual programme uses (Coalter, 2013). This socio-cultural approach to learning is useful for the purposes of my study, as by identifying the key components of a course the participants value, it enables me to identify aspects of the course that 'work' for each individual and for the group overall. However, the use of sport plays a crucial role in defining the context and culture of the learning environment for participants (Donnelly *et al*, 2011; Sherry, 2010; Spaaij, 2012), and so the participants' engagement with sport is likely to provide a strong influence upon the individuals' experiences of the courses.

From the literature discussed, it is apparent that the effectiveness of sport-for-development programmes cannot be assumed as inevitably positive, in the manner which sports acolytes and policy makers appear to believe them to be. Instead, the

effectiveness of any given sport-for-development seems to be contingent upon many varying contextual factors. Numerous lists have been provided (e.g. Coakley, 2011), but the coaches, educators, and peers appear to be influential in building up a welcoming and safe environment that enables individuals to critically question their societal role. However, the literature which these findings stem from bears little consideration for the participants' personal experiences while on the course, and frequently fails to provide follow-up data regarding the longer-term effects of participation. There is little engagement with questions surrounding how individuals might interpret the effectiveness of a course within their own lives, despite repeated calls from researchers to focus explorations on participants' more discrete and personal understandings of sport-for-development in order to consider effectiveness further (e.g. Kay, 2009; Lindsey & Grattan, 2012; Nicholls *et al*, 2010). This lack of individual-orientated inquiry has resulted in minimal understanding of the influence of sport-for-development upon participants' experiences of personal development from a subjective point of view, which is a knowledge base this thesis aims to contribute to. There is a burgeoning corpus of literature which does begin to address these concerns, which I now discuss.

2.2.2 Investigating participants' experiences

Over the last decade, there have been an increasing number of researchers who engage with qualitative explorations of wider issues within sport-for-development, and more critical assessments of the practices and effects of sport-for-development delivery. For example, Kay (2009) draws attention to the benefits of qualitative research in evaluating the effects of sport-for-development. In order to build upon the prevalent quantitative monitoring and assessment of sport-for-development programmes which inform management and policy, Kay argues that the sport-for-development evidence base might be expanded by adopting qualitative

methodologies which seek to capture participants' experiences. As well as providing an alternative to the numerous sources of positivistic data, Kay (2009) discusses the additional value qualitative approaches can have in the "decolonization" of sport-for-development research:

In the sport-for-development context the particular value in securing accounts of this (i.e. qualitative) type is that they provide a mechanism for addressing the complex social phenomena with which we are concerned. They allow us to use a wide lens, reaching beyond the sports programme to broader social context of family and community. They also offer a research process which, while undoubtedly continuing to privilege the researcher, employs tools which facilitates reflexivity and can offer a first step towards decentralizing the research (p.1180; parentheses added)

While Kay predominantly refers to sport-for-development research in international contexts here, the salient points appear to ring true when also considering domestic research. Kay calls for greater reflexivity from researchers to ensure participants' voices do not get lost within the power imbalance of traditional western researcher-participant approaches (i.e. Cartesian rationality of scientific thought which separates objective matter from subjective thought [Tuhiwai Smith, 1999]). Instead, Kay calls for the researcher to reflect on the contextual setting and cultural understandings of the research location so that "authentic local voices" (p. 1189) can be heard when considering the relative impacts sport-for-development has on the native participants' lives. Although this is discussed within the remit of international sport-for-development research as a modern form of neo-colonialism (e.g. Darnell & Hayhurst, 2011), Kay's arguments relate to a wider need within sport-for-development research; that focus on participants' perceptions of how sport affects their lives, and in what ways, will provide a more thorough understanding of the social impact of sport. I take this into account throughout my study and reflect

on my role within the research, to bring participants' voices to the fore-front in an attempt to understand their sport-for-development experiences.

Spaaij (2012) contributes further to the critical discussion of sport-for-development research in his study of a youth development programme in Brazil. He addresses questions about the extent to which positive outcomes from a sport-for-development scheme (in this instance the Vencer programme based in Rio de Janeiro) can be attributed to the utilisation of football. Spaaij also explores the effects of the programme within the participants' social lives through the use of social and cultural capital theory (Bourdieu, 1977), which brings to light the participants' social connections established because of the sport-for-development course. Spaaij discusses how these new networks impact upon individuals' lives beyond the course and into their personal and professional development:

Vencer provides a context for meaningful social interaction which serves as a basis for the development of social capital resources. It does not merely facilitate a close-knit network of people with similar experiences of socio-economic disadvantage (i.e. bonding social capital). Rather, the program also contributes to the creation and maintenance of linkages with people who can offer information and resources not currently available to the youth and their families. (Spaaij, 2012, p. 92; original parentheses)

The most valuable asset of the sport-for-development scheme, as argued by Spaaij, is the opportunity it affords individuals to develop relationships with others who they might not otherwise have encountered. This finding ensures that focus on sport-for-development research does not just concentrate on the participants of programmes, but also considers participants' relationships with those who run the courses (i.e. the tutors and programme organisers), and how these new relationships might affect their current relationships. The points of connections participants make throughout

the programme are influenced by the way tutors demonstrate the value of course materials within participants' lives. As such, there appears to be three interrelationships which influence the relative effectiveness of a sport-for-development programme; the participants' current contexts, the potential opportunities afforded by external support mechanisms (i.e. course organisers), and the tutors, who seem to be the meeting point. Spaaij develops his argument through the inclusion of both participants and tutors within his data collection, which provides useful recourse for my study, as it captures a fuller understanding of the processes involved throughout a sport-for-development experience. However, there is little engagement with questions about how the inclusion of sport within the programme facilitated development, beyond generating "valuable teaching and learning moments" (p.91) and "contributing to building relationships" (p.91). A more in-depth exploration of these lived bodily moments and relationships from the teachers' and learners' perspectives might yield further insight into the influence sport played within them.

As well as individual studies, there are also a growing number of critical reviews of literature in the sport-for-development area (e.g. Edwards, 2015; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014; Jones *et al*, 2016), each of which identifies further research considerations. For example, Haudenhuyse and colleagues (2014) discuss the importance for sport-for-development programmes to provide participants with the capacity to reflect on interpersonal and socio-political processes, which is cited as a key outcome for stimulating social change (Jennings *et al*, 2006). Haudenhuyse and colleagues also identify gaps in the literature which bear further exploration, such as practitioner knowledge of participants' experiences of social vulnerability, the implications of specific sports being used, the characteristics of the tutors, and how all of these factors influence delivery and impacts. These critical reviews provide further

justification for my phenomenologically-inspired investigation, as they call for a deeper understanding of participants' personal connections with sport-for-development courses for the benefit of practitioners and providers.

When considering qualitative research studies into participants' sport-for-development experiences, there appears to be an overreliance upon Bourdieu's (1977) social capital theory. Alongside Spaaij's (2012) study discussed earlier in this section, other examples which use such a theoretical approach include Kay and Bradbury's (2009) investigation of the 'Step into Sport' programme, which investigates volunteers' increased engagements with their local communities following their participation with the programme; Peachey and colleagues' (2011) exploration of the effects of a street soccer volunteering programme on participants; and Bradford and colleagues' (2016) examination of the volunteering pathways in sport for working class youths (further examples include Peachey *et al*, 2015; Sherry & O'May, 2013; Whittaker & Holland-Smith, 2016). While these studies provide useful insight into the social processes individuals might experience through participation, they all attest to similar results which fail to distinguish any definitive links between sport-for-development and effectiveness. The correlations between participation and positive outcomes (i.e. increased social capital) are established but lack depth, which is indicative of the wider body of literature into sport-for-development impacts (Adams & Harris, 2014; Mawson, 2012; Nicholls *et al*, 2010). Social capital theory does not account for individual's emotional and embodied experiences of sport-for-development, and so misses out on the rich personal descriptions which may be garnered through a focus on individuals' voices. Additionally, the majority of these studies only discuss youth participation and impacts in sport-for-development. The focus on youth development means there is a paucity of investigations into the sport-for-development experiences of individuals

aged 18 and over, despite the sports leadership courses I investigate being open to individuals aged 16+. Based on this critique, the suggestion could be made that alternative perspectives which investigate the influence of sport-for-development courses on individuals' development are required. This links to my third research question posited in Chapter 1:

Why might individuals' sports leadership experiences influence how they might make sense of their identity after participating with the course?

In order to address my third research question, I fore-front the course attendees' descriptions of their feelings both during and after the sports leadership course. One common feeling cited as being prevalent within sport-for-development is confidence, which I now consider further.

2.2.3 Confidence in sport-for-development

Of further interest regarding my study is how confidence is portrayed throughout the sport-for-development world, in particular in promotional materials. As identified in appendix A, the Sports Leaders UK website, amongst others, describes confidence as a quantifiable, distributable product that is readily available for consumption by willing customers. For example, quotes such as "our courses improve motivation, self-esteem, communication, teamwork and confidence" appear throughout the Sports Leaders UK website (Sports Leaders UK, 2013). In essence, the claim made by this rhetoric is that if you participate in a sport-for-development course, you will gain more confidence. This seems to be a somewhat simplistic and shallow observation, which overlooks the nuance of how this change occurs, and how it relates to any influences upon individuals' identities.

A possible explanation for the trite description of confidence used by the sport-for-development world is that its understanding of confidence is derived from the most

prevalent field in which the term appears in the literature; that of psychology. Here, confidence is discussed as an entity which can be measured, often using questionnaires and Likert scales, and typically alongside the other tenets of 'self-belief', such as self-efficacy, self-concept, and anxiety (Stankov *et al*, 2013). The depiction of confidence as something which can be increased is based on the psychological assumption that it is a physio-emotional function which results from external ecological factors, and can be manipulated and accrued through specific means, apparatus, and environments (Kleitman, 2008, cited by Maclellan, 2014). Sport-for-development programmes advertise confidence in a way that promotes confidence as an obviously desirable quality to possess, yet without any further explanation as to how it might manifest. The use of confidence in this way leads to it being overused and repetitive to the point of it being rendered almost meaningless.

Rather than employ a predefined definition of confidence, I instead intend to frame my discussions of individuals' experiences of confidences through phenomenologically-inspired literature, in particular Merleau-Ponty's notion of the *lived body* (1986). This approach emphasises the individuals' role in interpreting and bringing meaning to their emotional and bodily experiences of confidence, and how confidence may influence or manifest within their everyday lives. I now move on to discuss the previous instances of phenomenologically-inspired studies within sport sociology.

2.2.4 Phenomenological approaches to sport sociology

The use of phenomenology within sociological study is considered by some to have stemmed from the work of Schutz (1967), who allies the work of Husserl with a Weberian approach to sociology to argue that an individual's external world is known only through the individual's consciousness of it (Scott, 1995). This work was built

upon by sociological theorists such as Berger and Luckmann (1966) and Douglas (1967). Through the application of phenomenological inquiry, these authors discuss individuals' perceptions of their lifeworld within societies, and how associations with different sub-groups (or professional identities) leads individuals to ascribe different meanings within their lifeworlds. The influences of an individual's specific interests and institutionalisation can lead to variance between individuals' views of society to emerge (Scott, 1995). These early applications of phenomenological thought within sociology stimulated further phenomenological interpretations of various sub-groups and aspects of society (e.g. Douglas, 1971).

The potential for phenomenology to provide an appropriate theoretical basis for sport sociology has been noted by several authors. Whitson (1976) was one of the first to do so, emphasising the role historical and personal biographical experiences can play in informing future practices. More recently Kerry and Armour (2000) and Allen-Collinson (2009) provide insight into how phenomenological works, in particular Merleau-Ponty's, might be employed within sports studies. They argue how the prominence of the *lived body* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) has relevant connections with sport. The focus on the body as anchor of perception in experience provides a strong theoretical basis for exploring the physical and movement-related aspects of sport-for-development courses, and the impact the use of the body within learning has upon an individual's identity.

Despite these discussions, there are few examples to draw upon, particularly in this area of study. Given its alignment with elements of Taoism and Buddhism (largely through the centring of the mind and body [Nesti, 2004]), previous studies have employed Merleau-Ponty's work in relation to traditional Eastern practices and techniques. For example, Morley (2001) explores yoga and its links to

phenomenology, in particular Merleau-Ponty's more existentialist approach, in order to build upon previous transcendental critiques of yoga. Through this application, Morley discusses how the *lived body* rejects notions of a subject-object separation, and instead a "cosmic homology" (p. 75) between body and world is strived for. The notion of reversibility can also be applied to numerous concepts within yoga, such as paradoxical notions of diminishing sensory awareness in order to control sensory processes. Morley relates this in particular to breath control in yoga: "In breath extension, I focus on breath to put the rest of the perceived world into the background" (p. 79). The use of breath control is described as enabling the individual to concentrate on a single focus, which establishes a link between self and object to achieve a meditative state; therefore, as Morley argues, the reversibility between the interiority of our bodies and the exteriority of the world, and the exterior of the body and interiority of the world, is expressed through yogic practices. Morley goes on to discuss Desikachar's (1995, cited in Morley, 2001) descriptions of yoga practice, such as "yoga is not an external experience...we do it only for ourselves. *We are both observer and what is observed at the same time*" (p. 78, Morley's [2001] emphasis), which eloquently depicts how the *lived body* might sense and be sensed during the practice of yoga.

Wider applications of phenomenological inquiry within sport research include Nesti's (2011) work on anxiety and identity crisis in professional sport. Nesti argues that anxiety explorations in sport psychology would benefit from both a psychological (i.e. May, 1977) and hermeneutic philosophical (i.e. Heidegger, 1962) phenomenological approach, rather than the more prevalent cognitive-behavioural approaches which aim to measure, predict and reduce anxiety. He contests that by investigating individuals' meanings of their experiences of anxiety, it can be understood further in terms of their identity and how it is associated with their

sporting practices, as experiences of anxiety are not necessarily positive or negative. Hughson and Inglis (2002) discuss how a Merleau-Pontian consideration of football uncovers previously un-verbalised accounts of how it feels while playing. The experiential exploration also alludes to significant social, political, and economic influences upon individuals' meanings of playing football. Allen-Collinson and Owton (2015) draw upon sociological phenomenology to provide a more sensuous account of embodiment in women's running and boxing. In particular, the lived experience of heat provides a carnal example of the "intense embodiment" (p. 247) experienced through sport, and is discussed as an experience which is interwoven between boundaries of internal-external sensations. These examples show the potential phenomenological exploration has for my study in providing a lens through which to investigate individuals' embodied experiences of sport-for-development courses.

2.2.5 Embodied approaches to sport sociology

Work can also be drawn from the developing corpus of embodied sports studies. The work of Allen-Collinson and colleagues across numerous studies (e.g. Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2007; Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2009; Allen-Collinson & Owton, 2015) extols the virtues of phenomenologically-inspired research in exploring embodiment within sport. The focus on participants' personal accounts of movement enables evocative descriptions of the sensuous and corporeal aspects of experience to come to the fore. This emphasis on bringing the "sweat back in" (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2009, p. 81) to sports studies enables fuller understandings of the essences of individual movement. For example, in their account of overcoming injury, Allen-Collinson and Hockey (2007) depict the personal challenges they encounter when returning to distance running, which involves corporeal, affective, and social struggles with their identification as a 'runner'. Additionally, Allen-Collinson and Owton (2015) explore their experiences

of heat in relation to running and boxing, and discuss how theorisations of heat as both a distinct “sense” and form of “touch” (p. 262) resonate with their own lived experiences. These studies provide significant carnal insights into the individual’s mind-body-world relationship throughout their movement experiences, which attests to the inclusion of such focus within my exploration of individual’s embodied sport-for-development experiences. Notably, within the work of Allen-Collinson and Owton (2015) in exploring “intense” (p. 247) experiences of embodiment, the researchers utilise a potentially useful resource for my own investigation; Leder’s (1990b) conceptualisation of the *dys-appearing* body, which I discuss in section 3.2.4.

Other pertinent studies which focus on embodiment include Crossley’s (2005) exploration of mindful techniques, such as the practice of ashtanga yoga, and how they might influence an individual’s bodily practice. Crossley argues that such mind-body practices positions the body-subject and body-object as one. Thus, he asserts that activities such as ashtanga yoga are not simply mind-body practices, but instead are reflexive body techniques that strengthen the individual’s identity through their body. Spencer (2009) directly builds upon Crossley’s work through his work on mixed martial arts, contending that the training and practice of mixed martial arts creates the individual’s identity through the refinement of their bodily actions. These two studies depict a corporeal form of identity work which may be of value within my exploration of sport-for-development participants’ experiences, and how the physical practices they encounter might influence their identity work.

Standal and Engelsrud (2013) present two examples of their own work which focus on phenomenological accounts of embodiment; one which focused on rehabilitation and adapted sports (Standal, 2009), and one which explored young dancers’ training programmes (Engelsrud, 2010). The authors bring these studies together

to discuss the application of phenomenology, through both philosophical and methodological means, in investigating teaching and learning practices through movement. Despite each researcher applying phenomenology in different ways within different contexts, they are both able to apply the phenomenologically-inspired *attitude* (as discussed in section 4.2; Smith, 1992) throughout their explorations and contribute to embodiment discussions. These studies reaffirm the applicability of my phenomenologically-inspired philosophical approach in investigating individuals' embodied sport-for-development experiences.

2.2.6 Qualitative research in sport-for-development summary

The extant qualitative literature into sport-for-development provides an array of useful information and keen insights into the workings of such courses. It has opened debates on how effectiveness from developmental programmes might be defined and investigated, which has resulted in greater considerations for participants' interpretations of the course outcomes. However, the understandings gained from these first-hand accounts are done so mostly through the theoretical perspective of Bourdieu's social capital theory (1977). To provide added depth to the knowledge base of participants' experiences of sport-for-development courses, I propose that different theoretical approaches are required which provide greater scope when discussing the personal, affective, and embodied lived experiences of individuals, in order to gain greater insight into how participating with a sport-for-development course might influence an individual's sense of self. I now discuss the potential effects of the sports leadership courses on participants, and how they might experience personal development through educational and transitional means.

2.3 Personal development

2.3.1 Lifelong learning

The sports leadership courses provided by Sports Leaders UK might be considered to be examples of lifelong learning due to their educational emphasis, although this is not explicitly stated by Sports Leaders UK on their website (see appendix A). Lifelong learning is a difficult term to define conceptually (e.g. Aspin & Chapman, 2000; Gelpi, 1984). Nonetheless, it can be described as a form of learning that takes place in various contexts throughout a person's lifetime, both inside and outside of educational institutions (Fischer, 2000). Informal and non-formal settings are seen as viable routes for learning alongside the more traditional formal learning that takes place in an educational milieu; as Colletta (1996) notes, there cannot be a definitive boundary attributed to formal, informal, and non-formal education. The sports leadership courses may contain varying elements of formal, informal, and non-formal learning. Exploring how each tutor makes use of these forms of education during their delivery might provide insight into individuals' engagement of learning, as researchers actively encourage learning providers to synthesise these elements to enable learning to be lifelong and lifewide (Alheit & Dausien, 2002; Cushion *et al*, 2010; Field, 2000; Tuunman & Boström, 2002).

By broadening the scope of education, the lifelong learning approach has been argued to encourage individuals to learn in their everyday experiences (Alheit & Dausien, 2002; Field, 2000; Jarvis, 2001). Thus, one of the aims of lifelong learning, and therefore sport-for-development, is to enable individuals to take responsibility for their own learning to enhance their career prospects, professional skills, and personal development (Edwards *et al*, 2002). Another aim is to reduce the reliance on initial education by providing learning for all, in order to make it easier for people

to return to learning throughout their lives (DfEE, 1998). A key motivation for some who engage with lifelong learning is the prospect of the qualification they are working towards making a positive change in their life, in terms of employability, self-confidence, and social circumstances (Field, 2000; Rogers, 2006). This transformative element of lifelong learning is central to the claims made by Sports Leaders UK, as well as most educational and training providers (Chappell *et al*, 2003 [see also appendix A]).

However, these claims seem to be predominantly focused on the outcomes of the process, rather than the learning, or 'becoming', processes themselves, as is common throughout lifelong learning (Harrison *et al*, 2002). Learning is not a passive act that simply 'happens' to an individual, but involves active involvement (Chappell *et al*, 2003). Another way to understand how individuals experience learning and their identity is to see learning as a process of *becoming* (Beach, 1999; Colley *et al*, 2003; Hager & Hodkinson, 2009). Although becoming is a concept which is understood in different ways between various bodies of literature (e.g. Braidotti, 2002; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987; Thompson & Cook, 2013), I draw upon the view exalted by Hager and Hodkinson (2009), which interprets learning as a unique experience to each person due to their previous experiences, life histories, and ongoing personal development. Rather than presuming learning has a fixed start and end, this view presents learning as an unremitting process, with the learner always in a state of *becoming*. Even when a person is qualified to take up a certain position, such as a sports leader, they continue to learn every day through their own personal experiences and socio-cultural context (Saljö, 2003). Thus, the participants' personal development can be seen as continuous, even after the course has finished.

Discussions within the lifelong learning literature are also concerned with how personal and social transformation might be stimulated through educational programmes. One such example is Rogers' (2006) paradigms of lifelong learning to remedy deficits, to overcome disadvantage, and to enhance diversity. The *deficit* paradigm posits that a lack of resources is the main cause of inequality, meaning that making up this shortfall should be the aim of lifelong learning. The *disadvantaged* paradigm argues that the root of social exclusion is not a lack of education, but rather persecution by the elites and their dominant and repressive systems, which includes formal education. Therefore, changes to these systems and the implementation of different systems are required, such as lifelong learning. The *diversity* paradigm identifies social exclusion and differences in culture, society, and educational needs as crucial to lifelong learning, as lifelong learning itself is about difference. According to Sampson (1993), therefore, lifelong learning should celebrate difference in order to encourage agency, critical reflection, and creative initiative, as opposed to eradicating difference. Paradigms, such as these, provide indications of the ethos of lifelong learning providers, as they provide the conceptual basis for the claims organisations make regarding changing people's lives. However, lifelong learning providers rarely adopt just one of these paradigms, and instead all three paradigms are typically incorporated with varying importance (Rogers, 2006). As discussed in appendix A, most sport-for-development providers, including Sports Leaders UK, publicly identify with the diversity paradigm, although the deficit and disadvantaged paradigm might also be evident within their course materials and aims. This provides a point of reference when considering participants' experiences of personal development through the sports leadership course in relation to the claimed benefits of participation proclaimed by Sports Leaders UK.

While these debates show that it is difficult to wholly encapsulate how individuals develop through lifelong learning, they do fore-front the active role an individual has in their own learning experience. The individual's understanding of their learning context, responsibility, organisation, and desire to learn all bear consideration when investigating how individuals learn (Lynch, 2008). Insight into the learning context might also be gained through Sports Leaders UK's pedagogic practices. Pedagogy refers to the theory and practice of teaching, and is reflected within "the relations between educator, student and institution, the social context, the purpose and ethical implications of educational work, and the nature and social role of educational knowledge" (Zukas & Malcolm, 2002, p. 215). While Zukas and Malcolm (2002) warn there are no common lifelong learning pedagogies which exist in the UK due to the conceptual disarray of the numerous and overlapping educational providers, exploration of a lifelong learning provider's pedagogic practices provides insight into their paradigmatic ethos, and how they practically apply it through their teaching practices. Therefore, by considering Sports Leaders UK's and their tutors' pedagogies it will become clearer as to *why* they provide their educational materials, as well as *how* they believe their materials can stimulate personal development.

How the individual engages with the sports leadership course provides the opportunity to explore how they perceive their learning space, opportunities, and subjective experiences of the Sports Leaders UK learning context. By exploring how individuals might understand their learning through a physical medium, I investigate their embodied accounts of learning as becoming, which will present further insights into how participants engage and develop through such courses. In doing so, I address a current deficit of knowledge within the sport-for-development literature regarding embodied learning. Despite the clear potential for application of such theory within sport-for-development, to date no study has sought to explore the link

between physical participation with courses and how this relates to individuals' understandings of the courses. Physical interactions with a course may provide an insight into the engagements individuals make with a course, and how invested they feel during their participation.

2.3.2 Social and personal engagement

When starting a sports leadership course, the participant is entering a social context which requires a certain degree of personal engagement in order to achieve a desired result, such as a qualification or enhanced self-worth. The personal investment they make in engaging with the course materials and social encounters indicates how they make points of connection or disconnection with the course. Such an exploration might uncover any influence the course had upon the individual's perception of the personal development they experience. Several studies within sport sociology have adopted symbolic interactionist and Goffmanesque analytical lenses when investigating individuals' engagements and experiences with social and learning contexts, which might prove useful for my study. While I now discuss some examples of how previous studies have utilised these theoretical works, the principles underpinning the theories are explained further in Chapter 3.

Weiss (2001) employs a symbolic interactionist perspective to discuss how sport can be used to reinforce identity within society. He outlines the case for greater use of symbolic interactionist explorations within sport, with it being portrayed as ripe for social subjectivity (i.e. social recognition [Popitz, 1987]) due to the emphasis placed upon communications of significant social symbols, such as values, principles, knowledge, ability, and strength. He argues that sport reveals aspects of society more than other systems of symbols (or sub-cultures) can. He provides the example

of the frameworks involved in 'achievement', which is almost entirely dependent on others (e.g. judges, teammates, referees). It is only through the validation of these others that the individual can be deemed to have 'achieved'. This can be applied to wider social scenarios where representations of actions are required to be promoted by the individual, such as in a job interview, loan application, or sports leadership course assessment, with successful representation leading to social acceptance from others.

A study by Chesterfield and colleagues (2010) provides a pertinent example of how a Goffmanesque critique can be used within a sports educational setting. Participants' experiences of a high-level football coaching course were discussed alongside the ways in which the participants presented themselves to the course tutors during the delivery of the course. Throughout the course the participants engaged in an active negotiation with, and in some cases, outright rejection of the course content. However, the participants adopted a range of impression management behaviours (termed in this paper as *studentship* [Graber, 1991]) in front of the tutors and assessors in order to portray the behaviours deemed appropriate to pass the course and achieve the qualification. Once the qualification was achieved the participants reverted to their original behaviours and practices, with the only modifications from the course those which supported their original pedagogy and ontology. This study explores the highly contested and negotiated relationship between an individual and institution, which provides a relevant application of Goffman's (1959) presentation of the self that my own investigation can draw from.

An example of a study which examines an individual's relationship with a training programme and their sense of self can be found in Barker-Ruchti and Schurbring's

(2016) case study of a women's artistic gymnast. The researchers explore the individual's constructions and reconstructions of her sense of self in light of significant moments, namely entering the sport, relocating in order to train with the national team, and retiring from the sport. This investigation draws attention to the cultural learning encounters of the individual while training in sport, few of which prove relevant to settings outside of sport for this individual, leading to difficulties when they transitioned into retirement. The individual's self is posited as a form of learning as *becoming*, which can result in learning becoming embodied, durable, and resistant to change. These insights may help me to explain individuals' engagement or disengagement with different aspects of the sports leadership course, and why some individuals might be more resistant to change than others.

An example of a Goffmanesque investigation into an individual's sense of self and identity is Allen-Collinson and Hockey's (2007) autoethnographic study of long-term injury in amateur distance runners. The researchers examined their own disrupted identities using a symbolic interactionist framework throughout their own experiences of injury and rehabilitation. Despite being able to maintain a degree of their old athletic selves through various deployments of identity work (Snow & Anderson, 1995), such as maintaining social contact with other runners and walking their typical running routes, the meanings they attached to running changed. Because of their painful and frustrated experiences of injury and rehabilitation, their athletic identities had to be rebuilt with new interpretations of their selves considered. With the sports leadership courses potentially providing a 'second chance' of education for some participants (see appendix A), the notions of rebuilding and reinterpreting identities could provide valuable resources in understanding individuals' personal development.

Trejo and colleagues (2015) utilise Goffman's work as a framework to analyse individuals' experiences of the Homeless World Cup. Through a combination of applying the theories of presentation of the self and stigma, they found most participants to have had a negative experience during the tournament. Despite recasting their self in a positive form (i.e. as a footballer rather than homeless), most individuals suffered defeat at some stage during the tournament. This resulted in feelings of despair and isolation, which were exacerbated because of the stigma they experienced regularly as homeless individuals. The researchers question the competitive addition to social inclusion sport-for-development programmes due to the potential for individuals to experience frequent defeat, and the negative associations individuals will attach to these experiences. It will be interesting to note Sports Leaders UK's use of competitive sessions within their sports leadership courses within this study. Trejo and colleagues' (2015) study also highlights how individuals control their impression management and stigma because of their competitive experiences, with emotion being a key constituent in individuals' interpretations and meaning making processes. Indeed, this personal and subjective aspect of an individual's identity is another facet which this thesis explores.

These studies demonstrate how theories of identity development, such as symbolic interactionism and Goffman's presentation of the self, can prove a useful lens through which to explore individuals' relationships with sport and how it influences their personal development. These are discussed further in Chapter 3. More crucially, the studies discussed here provide a range of accounts of how individuals engage with sporting practices, what influences this engagement can have on their identity, and the influence their emerging identity has on their level of engagement. Personal and contextual factors may also influence an individual's understanding of

their identity and involvement with the sports leadership course, such as the participants' age or employment status, both of which are considered next.

2.3.3 Youth transitions

As Mawson (2012) observes, those who participate with sport-for-development courses fall largely into two main categories in relation to change; young people who are hoping to attain skills to aid their maturation and educational development, and adults who want a wider range of experiences in order to progress their career. I consider the former of these groups first and discuss the current literature surrounding how they experience change. As noted in appendix A, the sports leadership courses are predominantly aimed at 16-21 year olds. It is recognised that rapid and dramatic changes are experienced in the identity development of this age group (Bloomer, 2001; Coleman *et al*, 2004), and so insight into how sport-for-development courses fit in with these personal and wider life transitions could prove valuable. Although the youth transitions literature traditionally focused on the move from full time education to work amongst 16-21 year olds, in more recent years this change has been depicted as more protracted, unpredictable, and fragmented (Oliver, 2006; Roche *et al*, 2004). The reasons for this change are accredited to increases in education and training opportunities, flexibility in the labour market, pluralisation of lifestyles, economic instability, and an overall emphasis on individualisation since the 1980s (Raffo & Reeves, 2000; Roberts, 2009; Walther, 2006). Youth transitions have become a blurred space, in which youth-like dependency and adult autonomy can co-exist within the same individual. This has led to the creation of the term *young adult* to denote this grey area (Walther, 2006).

The term *yo-yo transitions* (du Bois-Reymond, 1998) has also emerged from this state of uncertainty, which depicts how young people can feel during their

development. 16-21 year olds are more likely to experience going back and forth between youth and adulthood, as well as the world of work and education (EGRIS, 2001; Pais, 2003). Yo-yo transitions can lead young people to experience stress, vulnerability, and confusion during this crucial stage of their identity development, making the search for the self even more complex and elongated (Adams & Marshall, 1996; Furlong & Cartmel, 1997; Oliver, 2006; Walther, 2006). A major reason why 'yo-yo' transitions are prevalent across the UK could be explained by the cultural and political structures which are enforced through policy. The UK has been described as having a 'liberal' transition regime model (Walther, 2006), which promotes individual rights and responsibilities over collective provisions, leading the individual to become an entrepreneur of their own career.

Whilst this 'liberal' transition regime can be understood as being a positive move towards agency and empowerment of the individual, such an argument overlooks the problems created by this system. Wood and Hine (2009) argue that policies such as these divide young people in a dichotomous manner; the 'haves' and 'have nots'; the responsible decision makers and the irresponsible decision makers; those who need protection and those from whom society needs protecting. Education and training opportunities have been described as short term stop-gaps which lack real quality, and flexible labour markets create confusion and additional risks, with the alternative being youth unemployment and dependency on the state (Furlong & McNeish, 2001; Hayes & Biggart, 2004). It is posited by several researchers (e.g. Colley & Hodgkinson, 2001; Wood & Hine, 2009) that these problems are compounded by government initiatives to assist the socially excluded which do not focus on the needs and priorities of those they are targeting. Instead, these initiatives are concerned with describing how work *should* be done to achieve governmental targets, which are derived from unrealistic, uniform perspectives of

deprived youth that can fall easily into certain categories. This is an example of how policies treat groups of individuals as homogeneous, such as 'learners' or 'youth', rather than being attentive to the heterogeneous needs of individuals. The policies and government have been accused of being prescriptive and breeding a culture of dependency, rather than creating community action which could make a difference to a young person's life and identity development (Colley & Hodgkinson, 2001; Hayes & Biggart, 2004; Wood & Hine, 2009).

The role of policy structures in youth transitions and identity development might also provide opportunities for young people. Within the last decade, youth policy has shifted away from the traditional 'welfarist' models towards more 'risk based' social policies (Wood & Hine, 2009). Such a move is designed to encourage young individuals identified as 'at risk' to become more self-reliant and responsible for their decisions, including in the work place (Kemshall, 2009). Government funding allows a wide variety of courses, education, and training to take place, which individuals have a choice to participate in. By empowering young people and providing them with choice from a young age, some researchers argue that young people's identities are in fact not threatened by the flexible labour market, but instead view the challenge of embarking on an immediate career post-education in a positive manner (Bradley & Devadason, 2008; Evans, 2002; Wyn & Dwyer, 1999). This argument highlights how young people can make active choices within their social contexts, enabling them to become reflexive individuals who have power over their own personal development. In the case of my study, these arguments provide useful insight into the socio-cultural backdrop against which the sports leadership courses take place, which bear consideration of how they might influence individuals' sport-for-development experiences.

While the youth transition literature may prove useful when considering the wider context of individuals' sport-for-development experiences, I am unsettled by the focus on pre-defined measures such as 'youth', as this negates crucial social considerations when discussing individuals. For instance, when elements such as maturity and life experience are taken into consideration, the classification of 'youth' based solely on age can seem somewhat arbitrary. A focus upon age also ignores other important contextual classifications, such as gender, ethnicity, race, and religion. Therefore, while there is an acknowledgement that youth transitions may be of importance to some participants within this study, instead I focus on what the individuals consider important in relation to their personal development.

2.3.4 Career transitions

In order to consider a wider spectrum of society as opposed to just 'youth', the most likely form of individual transition to occur because of the sport-for-development courses is *career transition*. This may manifest in the form of changing roles within a current job, attaining a new job, or gaining additional responsibilities outside the individual's present role, such as volunteering. As the sports leadership course is targeted towards those considered 'socially vulnerable' (as discussed in appendix A), the qualification can provide much needed experience and validation while in the process of job seeking. Therefore, the sports leadership course might aid a transition between unemployment and employment.

When discussing the general understandings of career transitions and development, typical views consist of gaining employment in one company, followed by a linear upwards progression up the 'corporate ladder' (Kelly *et al*, 2003). The reality is argued to be similar to the processes identified in the youth transitions literature, in that career transitions transpire in a multitude of forms (e.g. Janse van

Rensburg & Ukpere, 2014). Due to several organisational factors being identified which instigate change, such as 'downsizing', 'outsourcing', and 'delaying' (Brousseau *et al*, 1993), career transitions and development can no longer be viewed as simple or linear. Terms such as 'spiral', 'protean', and 'boundary' careers reflect the confusion involved in describing what is involved in an individual's career path, which incorporate all forms of entering, upward, downward, spiral, horizontal, and exiting movements in employment (Janse van Rensburg & Ukpere, 2014). These changes can be instigated by either the individual or by external forces out of their control. Therefore, there is clear potential to explore individuals' experiences of these changes in relation to their identity.

The career development literature identifies an inextricable association between identity, career, and transitions. The dynamism of the labour market and the fluctuations in the economic environment present significant threats to an individual's identity, which forces them to become more proactive in being responsible for their own transitions and employment (Alvesson *et al*, 2008; Van der Heijder & Van der Heijden, 2006). This places a greater emphasis on career development opportunities for individuals, such as sport-for-development courses. These opportunities can heighten individuals' feelings of employment security, as well as strengthen their sense of self-identity (Doherty, 2009).

The temporal impact of careers, development, and identity may also prove to be a worthy consideration in the context of my study, as previous life experiences are identified as a key constituent of both career aspirations and views of *possible selves* (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2013). Past events, from both the employment world and the wider social context, provide an affective aspect to individuals' views of their current position, and how they see their own career change or transitions

happening in the future (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2013). This argument highlights the usefulness of considering an individual's employment status when discussing their sports leadership experience and personal development, as it might provide a significant influence upon their motivations for participating, perceptions of the course influence on their career aspirations, and immediate future upon transition 'out' of the course itself.

2.3.5 Personal development summary

The literatures discussed in this section cover a wide range of personal development considerations, such as the educational aspect of sports leadership courses, the influence of the individual's level of engagement with the course, and the contextual factors which frame the individual's course experience. The way in which personal development might be investigated is also discussed, with symbolic interactionist perspectives of identity being presented as a useful resource for exploring an individual's sense of self in relation to their learning and development experiences. The participants' experiences of engaging with their sports leadership encounters may provide new insights into the effects of sport-for-development courses on individuals' lives.

2.4 Summary of literature review

This chapter has discussed a range of literature concerning sport-for-development, such as how the effectiveness of such programmes might be determined, ways in which participants' experiences have been investigated to date, and the potential for exploring individuals' experiences of personal development through phenomenologically-inspired theory. My critique of the relevant literature seems to draw out many claims regarding the impact of sport-for-development programmes (and sport itself) based on little empirical evidence. This has led researchers in the field to call for greater understanding of the social processes that participants

encounter throughout sport-for-development courses (e.g. Coalter, 2013; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014). It is in response to this call that I position my research and form the basis of my research questions. My study stems from the growing number of researchers who recognise the need to understand individuals' subjective experiences of sport-for-development programmes, in order to provide insight into how sport may be able to facilitate personal development (Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014), and to reflexively understand how individuals make connections with the course delivery and their personal lives (Coakley, 2011; Kay, 2009). To critically examine the influence sports leadership training has on individuals' lives, research is required which goes beyond the self-reported "lack of evidence discourse" (Nicholls *et al*, 2010, p. 249). There needs to be a deeper exploration which asks *how* and *why* sport-for-development might influence individuals' lives. Therefore, I seek to address how participants engage with the courses, and how this might influence their personal development. I now move onto discuss the theoretical literature which will provide me with frameworks for analysis.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Chapter

My son, philosophy, as I understand it, is reducible to no rules by which it can be learned; it is the amalgamation of all the sciences, the golden cloud which bears the soul to heaven. (Dumas, 1844-5, p. 195)

As Dumas' character, Abbé Faria, alludes to in the above quote, philosophy is the basis for all scientific inquiry. As a social scientist, the way I perceive the world and how I understand it is reflected in my ontology and epistemology (which are discussed further in Chapter 4), and these guide me in choosing appropriate theoretical concepts to draw upon during academic inquiry. In the present study, I adopt a phenomenologically-inspired approach to investigate individuals' experiences of sport-for-development courses. Through this approach I bring participants' voices to the fore, which aims to provide greater understanding of potential benefits of sport-for-development and the role sport might play in stimulating personal development. In order to do this, I draw from theoretical perspectives which align with phenomenology, namely symbolic interactionism, embodiment, and flow, so that my explorations contribute an original discussion to the sport-for-development field.

Chapter 2 discussed how an overreliance on one particular theoretical approach, Bourdieu's (1977) social and cultural capital theory, in sport-for-development investigations resulted in a narrow understanding of the effects it has on participants' lives. While the current corpus provides insight into the importance of forming social and professional relationships during sport-for-development programmes, it does not account for participants' experiential and embodied understandings of the courses, resulting in a lack of knowledge regarding how individuals might personally connect with their sport-for-development experiences. One of the main aims of my

thesis, as stated in Chapter 1, is to explore how individuals experience their sport-for-development encounter, and in what ways this interaction might affect their lives. Personal change and development involve an embodied experience following an encounter with a specific situation or context (as Yardley [1999] discusses in a health research context). Due to the physical nature of the participation and delivery of sport-for-development courses, as discussed in appendix A, the potential for embodied experiences of personal growth during such courses can be seen as vast. Therefore, in response to the mostly Bordieu-ian investigations into experiences of change through sport-for-development, I adopt an eclectic theoretical perspective which aims to draw out individuals' personal feelings of change and the meanings these developments have within their lifeworld; in essence, I focus on individuals' *identities*.

As described by Woodward (1997), identity "gives us a location in the world and presents the link between us and the society in which we live" (p. 1). Identity, therefore, might be drawn upon to help understand individuals' interactions, meanings and experiences with sport-for-development in relation to their lifeworld. Identity is employed as a framework to understand feelings, meanings, and things that matter to individuals within this research, in a similar manner as to how other researchers from symbolic interactionist (e.g. Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2007; Barker *et al*, 2015) and phenomenological (e.g. Nesti, 2011) traditions have employed it within sport and sociological investigations. By acknowledging that identities are multiple, complex and processual, it affords the scope to investigate how an educational programme such as sports leadership training might influence an individual's sense of self, and vice versa. Whilst this view of identity is not new (e.g. Woodward, 1997), I believe that applying this perspective of identity to explore

the embodied dimensions of sport-for-development courses contributes an original argument to the sport-for-development literature.

Adopting a phenomenologically-inspired approach acknowledges identity as a process of interconnectedness. As Allen-Collinson (2009) argues, “[...] the world, body and consciousness are all fundamentally intertwined, inter-relating and mutually influencing” (p. 282). In this sense, a phenomenologically inspired approach to identity views the individual’s own body as the “zero point” (Morley, 2001, p. 75) from which they understand their own world-as-lived, everyday life, and social context as a whole. The *lived body* is understood as the link between subjective and objective, personal and impersonal, consciousness and society (Merleau-Ponty, 1986). As such, I investigate identity by focusing on the individual’s experiences of the self, rather than an essentialist view of a stable ‘core’ self which separates the individual’s body from their cognitive processes, or viewing social structures such as government and discourse as the main determinants of identity. Nonetheless, I acknowledge the effect of competing discourses upon the individual’s identity, and that the self is inextricably linked with discourse, as human experience is always situated within social contexts and interactions (Weiss, 1999). As such, identity can be understood as the link between the inner self and the outside social world (Ybema *et al*, 2009). Identity is the dynamic interface between the individual and their external world, providing individuals with a location within society (Woodward, 1997). The concept of identity can be understood as an active and constant negotiation between the embodied, affective individual, and the social forces and discourses of society at play, thereby providing a “conceptual tool with which to understand and make sense of social, cultural, economic and political changes” (Woodward, 1997, p. 1).

To explore the relationship between the individual and society, and this relationship influences the individual's sense of self, I now move on to outline symbolic interactionism. This theoretical approach aligns closely to the phenomenological tradition, due to its emphasis on individual experience and meaning-making processes, with both approaches commonly being loosely bound by the pragmatist tradition within sociological and embodiment frameworks (e.g. Waskul & Vannini, 2006). I go on to discuss key theorists who have been identified to align with both symbolic interactionist and phenomenological traditions, namely Goffman, Hochschild, Merleau-Ponty, Leder, and Allen-Collinson, and how their works surrounding identity, embodiment, and feminism can be of value to my own study.

3.1 Symbolic interactionism

3.1.1 Principles of symbolic interactionism

The main concerns of symbolic interactionism have been helpfully distilled into three central principles by one of its key theorists, Herbert Blumer (1969): That people interact with things, including other people, based upon the meanings they have for them; these meanings are constituted through interactions with other people; and these meanings are mediated through an interpretative process that people undertake to make sense of and handle the constituents of their social worlds. These central principles have been expanded upon and added to by subsequent theorists in the field. For example, Snow (2001) proposes the inclusion of four broader principles of interactive determination, symbolization, emergence, and human agency. However, Charmaz (2008) argues for greater emphasis to be placed on gaining intimate familiarity with participants to enhance understandings surrounding meaning making. Nevertheless, the primary components of symbolic interactionist inquiry concern the ways in which humans employ symbols (such as language or physical gestures) to communicate with others, the interpretations of

these symbols by individuals, and the affects these interpretations have on the behaviours of actors involved in a social interaction (Jones *et al*, 2012).

Rather than social interaction being a case of stimulus-response mechanisms, the behaviour of individuals becomes symbolic during a social interaction. Once meaning is given to the interaction, this meaning then becomes the basis of the individual's actions (Scott, 1995). For example, the greeting of "how are you?" carries with it different implicit associations depending on the context of the social interaction. According to Scott (1995), this simple salutation is loaded with cultural and social symbols which signify the shared cultural heritage of the interaction. Symbolic interactionism explores how individuals interpret the external world, which is dependent upon the individual's social interactions, other people, and their actions (Cohen *et al*, 2011). The meanings an individual may attribute to these elements of their social world informs how they should act in social situations; thus, a symbolic interactionist exploration into an individual's identity involves an exploration of how an individual presents their self within social and cultural contexts (Hewitt, 2000).

The concepts of self and identity have been described as analogous, with the self being posited as the reflexive sense of one's identity, in response to one's perceptions of others (Jenkins, 2014). Positions within symbolic interactionism can vary on how identity might be understood, with a spectrum between two positions existing (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2007). At one end are more processual conceptions of identity which fore-front the influence social interactions and individual reflexivity have on the individual's active identity constructions. At the other end of the spectrum lie more structural identity positions, which focus on the passive role elements of identity, which results from the individual either implicitly or explicitly reacting to the demands of the social context. Due to my focus on active

meaning making processes and individual agency, I position myself more towards the processual end of this spectrum, although I acknowledge the influence of structural factors within the individual's sport-for-development experience (as I go on to discuss in section 3.1.2), and the contested negotiation involved in their identity construction.

These themes of self and identity, therefore, provide useful theoretical concepts with which to investigate individuals' experiences of sport-for-development courses. Rather than viewing course cohorts as a collective, or viewing the course and its effects as a stimulus-response mechanism, symbolic interactionism instead encourages focus to be placed upon individuals. This should lead to greater in-depth, personal, and subjective explorations of the effects of sport-for-development than have been provided within the academic literature to date (as identified in Chapter 2).

3.1.2 *Symbolic interactionism and identity*

An individual's relationship with their social world is key to symbolic interactionism, as it sheds light on how an individual understands and brings meaning to different aspects of their life. The individual's interpretations therefore reflect their sense of self and their understanding of their own identity in relation to their social world (Cohen *et al*, 2011). A key aspect of this, however, and a pertinent deviation from pragmatism (of which symbolic interactionism shares key foundational principles [Scott, 1995]), is how these interpretations are communicated via social interactions. As social interactions involve more than one party, the way in which an individual constructs symbols in their world, and thus their identity, is affected by the social world they are interacting with (Craib, 2014). In essence, the way in which an

individual understands their own identity is influenced by how that individual perceives others to perceive them (Jones *et al*, 2012).

Scott (1995) argues that “the most important elements of the external world that actors must interpret are other people and their actions” (p.102). This is due to social interactions involving a certain amount of symbolic constructions from the individuals involved, resulting in *symbolic mediation*; that is, meanings are produced, reproduced, and transformed through communication with others, which results in shared symbolic understandings of phenomena within a particular encounter or social group. It is through this communication that individuals are able to construct their own meanings about phenomena, as well as meanings about the other individuals in the interaction (Mead, 1927). This not only helps to explain the interlinking individual and social interpretations of an individual’s identity, but also how symbolic mediation results in different cultures, sub-groups and social movements. However, it should be noted that despite the strong emphasis placed upon social things, symbolic interactionism is methodologically interested in the individual. Rather than assuming the existence of inherent social structures, this approach views social processes and groups as a result of “the collective or concerted actions of individuals seeking to meet their life situations” (Blumer, 1969, p. 84).

An individual’s identity is not just constructed via *social* interactions, but can also be explored through their interactions with the *material* world. For an individual to actively engage with their world they require information regarding their circumstances, which can be accrued through learning and past experiences. From this information, the individual can construct a meaningful understanding of their situation, from which they can decide how to act upon that understanding (Scott,

1995). This explains how two individuals can see the same item in differing ways; for example, cardboard boxes are used mainly for storage by adults, but young children frequently wish to use them as playthings.

Using a symbolic interactionist approach, it is possible to investigate an individual's identity through their interactions with both the social and material aspects of their world (commonly grouped together as *objects*), due to these interactions being a result of their individual meaning making processes – as asserted by Blumer (1969), “[...] in order to understand the action of people it is necessary to identify their world of objects” (p.11). In adopting a symbolic interactionist approach to identity for this study, I seek to investigate the meanings individuals ascribe to their sport-for-development experiences. This involves exploring the ways in which individuals interact with the objects they encounter on their sports leadership course, including how they negotiate different social interactions and the ways in which they utilise the material aspects of the course.

The act of social interaction – an individual's behaviour, expressions used, body movements, tone of voice – not only presents a display of the individual's perception of their self, but also reflects their interpretation of the others' identities they are interacting with. This act has been described as the *presentation of the self* by Erving Goffman (1959).

3.1.3 *Presentation of the self*

Although I have placed the majority of my focus upon the role objects have in influencing an individual's identity during my discussions so far, *presentation of the self* alludes to the active role the individual plays in constructing and portraying their identity. The individual is posited as a self-reflexive being who interprets each social

situation they encounter. In interpreting the situation, the individual considers the demands required of them, which might include social etiquettes, cultural rules, and how the individual perceives others to see them. As a result of these interpretations, the individual is able to manipulate their *presentation of self* in a way they see as the best fit to the social situation. In essence, the individual is able to influence the perception of their self by altering elements of their 'performance', such as their appearance, voice, or behaviour (Jones *et al*, 2012). The individual constantly assesses the response of those present in the social situation through *self-monitoring* (Snyder, 1974), and may adapt their presentation based on the perceived feedback they receive.

Goffman (1959) employs a dramaturgical metaphor to discuss this creative role-playing behaviour: While *front stage*', individuals seek to present a certain impression of themselves to their audience. This is usually achieved through conforming to standardised definitions and unspoken rules surrounding the particular situation they find themselves in, and thus adopting a certain role. Subsequently, when an individual encounters a different social situation they are required (or believe they are required) to assume a different role. The specific social context defines what role individuals adopt to avoid embarrassment or save *face*, as well as influence what impressions they give off (known as *impression management*) and wish their audience to see. As in the theatre, the individual's self (or internalised world) can be divided into a *front stage*, which is where the individual performs to a public *audience*, and a *backstage*, which is where the individual can prepare for their *front stage* role and adopt a less public role (Goffman, 1959). Goffman formulated these distinct regions of performance during a stay at a hotel, where he became intrigued by the interplay between the local staff within the presence of tourists; when customers (the *audience*) were present the staff

(considered to be *front stage*) would use coded language and surreptitious gestures to communicate between each other, but once they were in the hotel kitchen and away from customers (or *backstage*), the staff became their own audience and communicated differently, using their own commonly accepted language and actions (Burns, 1992). This theatrical performance is supported by the *props* (clothes, accessories, etc.), *scenery* (place of residence, shops they visit, career choice etc.), and *vocal performance* (lexicon, tone of voice, accent etc.) an individual utilises in order to reiterate to others the self they wish to present.

Goffman also discusses how individuals present their selves during interactions with others, and how there are implicit rules involved during these interactions (1972). He argues that individuals enter social interactions with premeditated expectations regarding the *interaction ritual*. These expectations lead the individual to present their self, or *face*, which can be motivated by either the desire to match the individual's own perception of their self, or by the individual's perception of the audience's expectations and preferences. Goffman argues that individuals typically strive to maintain a social order, and prefer to save *face* rather than disrupting the social order if they do not comply with the audience (Burns, 1992). If the expectations of one individual are not met by the other, then an attempt at restoring the *ceremonial order* is made, which can involve the individual *alienating* the other in order to save themselves from embarrassment. Goffman (1972) describes different types of *alienation*, such as *external preoccupation*, *self-consciousness*, *interaction consciousness*, and *other consciousness*, some or all of which can occur concurrently. If the other perceives they are being *alienated*, this can also disrupt the interaction and influence future interactions for both the individuals involved.

Presentation of the self is not just a reaction to an external audience however; “the individual cannot escape ‘society’” (Scott, 1995, p. 107). Even when alone, an individual’s interpretation of their self is manipulated by their perceptions of others’ attitudes, behaviours, and rules. This is explored further by Goffman in “Asylums” (1961a) and “Stigma” (1963), where he argues that organisational routines are employed by others to affect the individual’s behaviours, which can eventually result in an adjustment or shift in their identity. Those who employ these stratagems are called *institutions*, which are a form of group or social activity (Mead, 1927), leading to the resultant change in the individual being known as *institutionalisation* or *socialisation*. This involves the individual reacting to social situations in a predictable and ritualised manner as determined by the *institution*; with the individual being either a *captor* or a *guard* (Goffman, 1961). Scott (1995, p. 105) provides an everyday example of *socialisation* whereby most people refrain from theft due to the anticipated reactions and consequential activities of others (i.e. call the police) if caught doing so. Conversely, if an individual is the victim of theft, they will react in a manner which they feel befits the situation (i.e. call the police) due to the *institutionalised* meanings ascribed to personal property (i.e. that they are owned by the individual and are not to be used or possessed by others without permission). However, the individual may also attempt to establish differentiation between their self and the role they are required to temporarily adopt in the situation; Goffman terms this *role distancing* (1961b).

The notions of presentation of the self and institutions may prove useful for my study, as I investigate the effects institutions, in this case sport-for-development and more specifically Sports Leaders UK, have on individuals’ identities. While on the sport-for-development course, the individuals may be encouraged to adopt the attitudes and behaviours deemed appropriate by Sports Leaders UK in order to achieve their

qualification. The individuals might also be required to present their self in a way they perceive to align with the tutors' interpretations of the role of a 'sports leader', which may lead to some form of shift in the individual's identity within their everyday life. In appendix A, I identify some of Sports Leaders UK's perceptions of required attitudes and behaviours for their courses which are displayed on their website, as well as Sports Leaders UK's own presentation of its self to potential and current customers. By adopting a symbolic interactionist approach to identity, my phenomenologically-inspired investigation seeks the individuals' meanings regarding their experiences. I investigate how individuals might display varying engagement behaviours throughout their training, and explore what (if any) influence the institutions of sport-for-development and Sports Leaders UK have on their identity and everyday life.

3.1.4 Emotions, emotional management, and emotion work

Despite the attention given to the individual's cognitive activities during interaction and reflection, Goffman's microsociological theorisation of self appears only to refer to the affective components of such processes as being dependent on the social; despite *impression management* being an active process, it is difficult to know from Goffman's analysis whether social actors reflect on their emotions in terms outside of the immediate social scenario. As such, it can be argued that Goffman portrays emotions as in some ways 'passive', in that they are invoked only due to an audience being present. Indeed, Arlie Hochschild (1979) argues that Goffman's actors do not appear to actively control or alter their feelings in the same way in which they control their outward impressions; it has even been noted that symbolic interactionist pioneers such as Mead and Dewey make no reference to emotion at all in their works (Scott, 1995). This apparent disparity is addressed by Hochschild (1979; 1983), who argues that an individual can manage their feelings within certain social

situations. She posits that the understanding of what emotions are and what they mean is largely social and cultural, and that they are influenced significantly by social rules (1979). In most social situations, there are often expectations regarding what emotions should be felt and displayed by individuals; for instance, grief at a funeral or joy at a wedding. However, the individual does not always respond in the manner anticipated or expected by others. This discrepancy can lead the individual to experience dissonance and discomfort, which can only be resolved through the individual's *emotion work* (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561). Emotion work involves the individual actively trying to change their display of feelings by either adopting *deep acting* techniques of accepting the required emotions to a greater extent and providing a more convincing display, or by rejecting the emotions and giving a less believable performance. The use of the term *emotion work*, as opposed to control or suppression, indicates the active decision making process involved; emotions are not an unconscious response to a stimulus, but can be shaped and negotiated by the individual (Hochschild, 1979).

This argument is developed through the concepts of “commoditization of feeling” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 569) and *emotional labor* (Hochschild, 1983), which are used to discuss how emotion management and work can be commoditised by individuals. The most common examples of these occur in the world of employment, where individuals are frequently required to undertake *emotional management* in order to present a public display of happiness and willingness to help, perhaps none more so than Hochschild's own example of airline stewards and stewardesses (1983). Within this context, the individual is being paid to present a certain display of emotions which align with the expectations of the job, but which might not correlate with the individual's internalised feelings. As Hochschild argues, “what is sold as an

aspect of labor power is deep acting” (1979, p. 569), with an individual’s suitability for a job often correlating with their capacity to manage their feelings.

In essence, *emotion work*, *feelings rules*, and *emotional labor* refer to the interaction between the individual’s affective sense of self, their interpretation of the demands of the social setting, and the role affect can play in an individual’s meaning making processes. The subsequent emotions presented, and consequent feelings experienced from the display, are akin to Goffman’s *presentation of the self* (Scheff, 1990). While emotions each have generally accepted socially-constructed meanings, the individual can also infer their own meanings of each emotion based upon their own experience. *Emotion management* is a dynamically reflexive individual and social construct, involving both agency and structural constraints (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012); “[emotion work] is work in which individuals continually and privately engage. But they do so in obeisance to rules not completely of their own making” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 563). These rules that Hochschild refer to are posited as *feeling rules*, which encompass the latent social and cultural milieu which influence an individual’s decision making regarding the appropriate emotions to display in a given situation. For example, one is ‘expected’ to feel ‘happy’ at celebrations, and one ‘should’ feel ‘sad’ at remembrance services. The reasons why an individual *expects* to feel, or knows that they *should* feel (which do not always necessarily align [Hochschild, 1979]), is due to the *framing rules* which provide an interpretative and ideological framework regarding the social situation from which the individual can draw from. As an individual’s ideology and interpretations change over time, their framing of social situations also changes, which can lead to a reinterpretation of the feeling rules they believe are suitable.

This conceptualisation of affect by Hochschild and others provides a rich resource from which to draw during my study when exploring individuals' interpretations of their social interactions during the sport-for-development courses, and consequent feelings. How an individual positions their self and their emotions in relation to socially-defined feeling rules provides insight into how they both view their self and how they are seen by others (Boiger & Mesquita, 2012). Further understanding of the individual's sense of personal development and possible identity change might be achieved through greater recognition of their affective experiences, alongside their cognitive and physical experiences, of the sport-for-development course.

3.1.5 Symbolic interactionism summary

By adopting a symbolic interactionist lens to investigate identity, I will be able to engage with questions surrounding how individuals participate with the courses, the meanings which arise through participation, and the influence these meanings have upon their everyday lives. Individuals' perceptions about the important aspects of their sport-for-development experiences are foregrounded, meaning that their active constructions and socially-influenced contestations may be depicted in greater depth (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2007). By drawing from both Goffman's work on *presentation of the self*, and Hochschild's *emotion work* and *management*, I investigate and theorise both the cognitive and affective investments involved in individual's meaning making experiences, and how these influence their identity and self within their everyday life.

As well as symbolic interactionist theory surrounding identity, I also draw from phenomenology for the philosophical underpinning of my study. Both symbolic interactionism and phenomenology have analogous epistemological and ontological foundations (Scott, 1995), which focus on an individual's experiences and how they

construct meaning within their world⁴. I now move on to discuss phenomenology in greater detail.

3.2 Phenomenological theoretical approaches

3.2.1 *The phenomenologically-inspired approach*

Similar to symbolic interactionism, phenomenological inquiry does not perceive the nature of human behaviour as consisting of cause and effect relationships. Instead, it is concerned with understanding individuals' experiences of phenomena through their descriptions. When I state that my thesis is *phenomenologically-inspired*, it refers to a philosophical and epistemological position which aligns most closely to existentialist understandings of phenomenology (see section 4.2.1 for a discussion of the main methodological movements). Existential-phenomenology rejects the binary subjective-objective divides within human experiences, which is in opposition to the prevailing 'natural attitude' in psychology (Nesti, 2004), and posits that human experience of the world is born out of the relationship between subjective consciousness and the objective world (Morley, 2001). However, existentially-orientated phenomenologists furthered this discussion of the subjective-objective relationship by pinpointing the human body itself as the "standpoint from which all things are perceived and experienced" (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2009, p.77). As a result, Merleau-Ponty (1986) depicts the body as one that is *lived*, which is posited as the medium of an individual's perception. The *lived body* is the intersubjective nexus of individual experience where mind-body-world are interrelated.

⁴ It should be noted that a key ontological and epistemological difference between phenomenology and symbolic interactionism exists in their views of subjective experiences. While phenomenology problematizes notions of subjective experiences, as the subjective and objective are viewed as inseparable and intertwined (Merleau-Ponty, 1986), symbolic interactionist thought typically considers subjective interpretations and objective truths as related yet separate (Denzin, 1992).

This notion is developed further through Merleau-Ponty's (1986) conception of *intentionality*, which refers to how consciousness is always conscious of something; thus, consciousness is always intentional and directed towards something. *Intentionality* also relates to how an individual's consciousness is linked with how they experience phenomena; there is a "unified relationship between what we perceive and the object itself" (Nesti, 2004, p. xi). *Intentionality* demonstrates how an individual is an agentic being within their being-in-the-world, as how they direct their *intentionality* towards objects contributes to its meanings, for both the individual and others. For example, a flat piece of wood with four supports which raises it off the ground may commonly be construed as a table. However, it can also be used as a bench, an ironing board, a weapon, a shelter, a shield, a platform, plus many other variations. Each object is subjected to the meanings of each individual and their *intentionality*, which explains the discrepancies in how different people experience the same phenomenon in their own individualistic ways (Allen-Collinson, 2011b). Merleau-Ponty (1986) distinguishes two different types of intentionality; *operative* and *act*. *Operative intentionality* encompasses the individual's personal and global perceptions of their immersion within the world. *Act intentionality* is the individual's more definable interaction with the world stemming from the latent perceptions afforded by the individual's operative intentionality. Therefore, although these two forms of *intentionality* can be distinguished, they cannot be separated from one another (Evans, 1993).

The concepts of the *lived body* and *intentionality* are particularly relevant to my field of study, as sport-for-development is distinctive from other development programmes due to the physical nature of its course delivery. Furthering his discussion on the *lived body*, Merleau-Ponty recast human consciousness as *embodied consciousness*, as the lived body is not objectively separated from an

individual's mind, but rather it is through the body that we encounter our daily lives (Meier, 1988). Therefore, an individual's being-in-the-world is perhaps best understood through their body (Kerry & Armour, 2000). This is further emphasised by Merleau-Ponty's (1968) use of the term *flesh*, and recasting being-in-the-world as *flesh-of-the-world* in order to better portray an individual's connection with the world and the basic constituents of the world itself; the body and the world are as one *flesh*. The term *flesh* is characterised by a series of mind-body-world *chiasms*; the intertwined relationships of subject and object, an individual's vision and the vision of others, an individual's perception and use of language (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). These chiasmatic relations are captured through Leder's (1990a) example:

Utilizing the example of one hand touching the other, [...] I capture [the other hand] as material object, but no longer experience through it as the toucher. There is a "divergence" (*écart*), a "fission," that stops the phenomenal and objective body from quite merging. [...] The two sides of the body are not ontologically separate categories [...]. My hand could not touch unless it itself were tangible, installed in the same world as its objects. The lived body is necessarily chiasmatic, a perceiver/perceived. (p.210, original emphases)⁵.

Merleau-Ponty's (1986) discussions of how experience is not just an individual process, but instead involves *intercorporeality*, suggests an individual's embodiment is also tempered by both social and inanimate interactions (1964, cited in Weiss, 1999). This can be explained further through Merleau-Ponty's notion of *reversibility* (1968), which suggests that all sensory perception is reversible, "we both touch and are touched, see and are seen" (Allen-Collinson, 2009, p. 286). Therefore, an individual's experience consists of social, cultural, and temporal relationships. Such

⁵ In the same discussion Leder (1990a) goes on to discuss further chiasmatic relationships, which stem from a recognition of *viscerality*; flesh and blood, body and world, self and other, visibility and invisibility. These are proposed as additions to Merleau-Ponty's work in *The Visible and the Invisible* (1968), which was left incomplete following his untimely death.

an approach in my study sheds light on how the unique context of a sport-for-development course might provide the opportunity for embodied experiences of learning and personal growth.

The use of these works within my study brings to light the relationality of individuals' sport-for-development experiences. Rather than simply viewing the course as an external intervention imposed upon the individual, application of the discussed theoretical concepts enables exploration of the individual's relationship with the social and cultural facets of the course. How the individual perceives their experiences and presents their self within their own chiasmic relationship of mind-body-world indicates their perception of the influence their sport-for-development experience has had upon their life. The corporeal element of participants' experiences and understandings of courses has, to date, been overlooked by the relevant literature (as identified in Chapter 2). Therefore, I now discuss phenomenologically-orientated theoretical considerations relating to the lived body.

3.2.2 Embodiment

The body can be viewed as a site to situate and distinguish others through difference, which opens up discussions of gender, race, disability etc. Hence, the body can be used to explore what these differences mean to individuals within their lifeworld. According to Sanders (2006), sociological investigations into embodiment possess the commonality of viewing "the body as a meaningful object and visibly available indicator of an acting subject within an interactional context" (p. 280). Thus, the body provides a visible medium, both to ourselves and others, through which interactions are received, meanings are shaped, and responses are expressed (Csordas, 2008). The individual's relationship with their body, how they use it within

their lifeworld, and how it is received by others provide an insight into the individual's identity, self, and emotional experience (Sanders, 2006).

To clarify, when referring to the body both the *physical* and *social* body are discussed; both what is perceived by the individual and what is seen by others. This clearly links back to the symbolic interactionist notions of identity and self, which involves an intertwining of individual and social meaning making, and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological perspective of the interrelationship between the mind-body-world. A dichotomy between an *inner* and *outer* body is not created by considering both the physical and social body, as embodied experiences involve a reciprocal mixture of individual needs and spatiotemporal movements (Todes, 2001). Merleau-Ponty's (1986) account of embodied learning includes a discussion of *body image* and *body schema*. The former refers to the individual's attitudes and preconceptions regarding their body, and how the body is used as an intentional object. The latter provides the individual with a material awareness of their body's movements, including its interaction with the surrounding environment and objects. These two labels should not be thought of as providing an objective-subjective (or *body-object* and *body-subject*) split in considering the body, as the lived body is both the medium and site of an individual's interaction with the world, and so is therefore subject to change (Merleau-Ponty, 1986).

These theoretical concepts are of particular relevance to practical-based developmental programmes, such as sport-for-development, which use derivatives of habitual and embodied learning to disseminate their developmental material during their courses (as discussed in appendix A). However, as identified in Chapter 2, sport-for-development research has yet to adequately investigate the embodied experiences of participants. Furthermore, Standal and Engelsrud (2013) identify a

lack of embodiment research within physical education, and an overall deficiency in phenomenologically-orientated research into embodiment experiences within the broader context of human movement studies. Similarly, Wellard (2016) laments the dearth of embodiment related research within sport and physical activity studies:

Where embodiment can be seen to offer opportunities to acknowledge the biological and physical presence of our bodies as a prerequisite for understanding the social in all its forms (such as, emotional, sensual, political, environmental) it is not apparent that embodied forms of thinking are being widely adopted in research processes” (p. 1).

Despite the body appearing to be of obvious concern within sporting and movement studies, as well as sport-for-development, there are limited accounts of the personal sensory dimensions involved in an individual's corporeal experiences (although notable examples include Allen-Collinson & Owton, 2015; Sparkes, 2009). As Crossley (2001) argues, an individual makes their world more meaningful through an embodied understanding of the learning context. Zeitner and colleagues (2016) also decry the absence of physically expressive explorations of individuals' social interactions, particularly within leadership contexts. I therefore consider the influence embodied practices may have on the effects of individuals' sport-for-development experiences. Embodied experiences have also been discussed in sporting contexts through feelings of disembodiment, outer-body experiences, and a loss of sensation of bodily movements, through the concept of *flow*.

3.2.3 Flow

Woodward (2016) discusses the concept of embodiment through the experience of *being in the zone*, which is a psychosocial account of Csíkszentmihályi's (1990) psychological concept of flow. The experience of flow often involves juxtapositional temporal, corporeal, and social aspects; time seems to stop but nevertheless

continues, bodily sensations are explicit yet transcend consciousness. Such sensations can be experienced not just in sporting or physical instances, but have also been identified in activities such as playing chess (Puddephatt, 2003), reading with one's child, surgery (both in Csíkszentmihályi, 1990), and designing computer games (Baron, 2012). Therefore, it is not the activity which determines whether flow is experienced, rather it is the individual's sense of connection with that activity. Jackson and Csíkszentmihályi (1999) identify commonalities from a wide range of individuals' descriptions of their flow experiences, and establish nine dimensions of flow, which are; challenge-skills balance, action-awareness merging, clear goals, unambiguous feedback, concentration on the task at hand, sense of control, loss of self-consciousness, transformation of time, autotelic experience. Thus, Csíkszentmihályi's theory of flow might be of use in understanding participants' subjective and sensory experiences of sport-for-development courses.

Flow might also assist in furthering understanding of how individuals engage with their sport-for-development course through Kahn's (1990) conceptions of *personal engagement* and *personal disengagement*. These refer to aspects of an individual's self which they wish to engage or disengage during social interactions. In order to engage or disengage these aspects of their self, the individual must actively invest or divest personal energies into cognitive, affective, and corporeal dimensions of their subsequent engaging or disengaging behaviours. These concepts have clear connections with Goffman's (1959) presentation of the self and Hochschild's (1979) emotional management, as outlined in sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4; indeed, Kahn's (1990) conceptual approach utilised both sociological and psychological theories, including Goffman (1959), to analyse and discuss his data. Additionally, they encapsulate how an individual's identity might be influenced through engagement or disengagement with specific situations. The individual's sense of personal

development, sense of connection with the tasks of the course delivery, and sense of immersement within the social encounters of the sport-for-development course are all reflected in the individual's personal engagement or disengagement behaviours.

Woodward (2016) notes that as *flow* often involves experiences which take the individual "out of the body" (p. 21), Merleau-Ponty's (1986) positioning of the mind-body-world nexus contributes to the understanding of an individual's sensation of *being in the zone*. Their complete immersion within the immediacy of their task while simultaneously being unaware of their specific motor skills or decision making processes indicates that *being in the zone* involves an amalgamation of mind-body-world. Woodward goes on to argue that phenomenology insufficiently addresses social and affective aspects of embodiment, and so posits a recasting of the term *enfleshed* (p. 27), which is similar, yet different, from Merleau-Ponty's depiction of *flesh* discussed in section 3.2.1. In her use of *enfleshed*, Woodward proposes a holistic conceptualisation of *being in the zone*, and in turn embodiment, by acknowledging the individualised sensation of emotion and the potential for shared, collective, and democratic social experiences of embodiment (Jordan *et al*, 2016). It is also worth noting the emerging literature in sociological phenomenology which focuses on personal, social, and emotional accounts of embodiment (e.g. Allen-Collinson & Owton, 2015; Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2009). These considerations of embodied experiences provide a useful resource to draw from when exploring individuals' physical and affective accounts of their sport-for-development course. As well as the pre-reflective bodily experiences of flow, it is also worth considering individuals' experiences of bodily self-awareness, or *dys-embodiment*, and how this might influence their sport-for-development experiences.

3.2.4 The *dys-appearing* body

The relationship between Merleau-Ponty's (1986) lived body and an individual's perception of tasks is explored further by Leder (1990b). Leder highlights the paradoxical nature of the body in action, and indeed in everyday life. Despite the body being eminently visible to an individual and is commonly the root of their experiences, the body is frequently overlooked within an individual's consciousness. As Leder notes, "one's own body is rarely the thematic object of experience. When reading a book or lost in thought, my own bodily state may be the farthest thing from my awareness" (1990b, p. 1). Leder's argument goes beyond the notion of *being in the zone* - although both conceptions discuss the unawareness of the body during optimal performances and situational-specific tasks (as discussed through Woodward's work in section 3.2.3), Leder focuses more on the constant, everyday dynamic between the individual and their body. This is exemplified through the individual's relationship with their internal organs - despite being crucial to their existence, individuals infrequently give attention to their internal organs, with sentience of their presence being rare apart from in times of discomfort. Therefore, there is a contrasting dynamic involved in an individual's embodied experiences, which Leder explores in relation to bodily *absence*.

Of particular relevance to sports studies, and my thesis, is Leder's conceptualisation of the *dys-appearing* body (p.69). The absent, or *recessive*, body is characterised by Leder as a healthy body. The necessary bodily functions are regulating as they should, and so the body does not require the attention of the individual. However, during experiences of pain or disease, the body demands the consideration of the individual and becomes *ecstatic*, thus requiring attention to be directed upon the requisite site of the ailment. Therefore, while an absent or *disappeared* body refers

to a functional body, Leder uses the term *dys-appearance* to indicate that the body is experiencing dysfunction⁶.

The sensation of dysfunction either upon or within the body intensifies the individual's consciousness of this aspect of their world, or as Leder terms it, their *affective call* (p.73). Rather than reducing pain and disease to a set of sensory stimuli, they can instead be understood as a manner of being-in-the-world. Upon suffering the experience of pain or disease, the affected area is recast as an *alien presence* (p.76) to the individual's self, as the body is involuntarily countering the individual's own intentionality (i.e. of not experiencing discomfort). The affected area becomes distanced by the individual, objectified in search of a meaning as to why it has been affected, and interpreted in an attempt to resolve this discrepancy as soon as possible. However, *dys-appearance* does not only relate to physical sensations, as this would imply a return to a Cartesian body-mind, objective-subjective split. Instead, the *dys-appearing* body refers to an individual's embodied experience of pain, a meeting point of corporeal, affective, and cognitive disruption within the individual's lifeworld. Leder (1990b) provides the apposite example (in regards to sports studies) of anxiety:

I discover my hands becoming clammy, my voice beginning to crack. My heart is racing and my breathing takes on a choked quality. Try as I might to focus on my talk, my attention is pulled back to these physical manifestations. [...] This anxiety is undoubtedly mine, but is also something from without [...]. This affective disturbance not only gives rise to bodily self-consciousness, but may have originally been the result of it. [...] My self-awareness in the face of (a) Gaze led to nervousness and consequent bodily symptoms. (pp. 84-85)

⁶ Leder (1990b) notes that the Greek prefix of "dys" translates in English as "bad", "hard", or "ill" (p. 84).

Within this example, the interrelationship of mind-body-world can be identified through the individual's *dys-appearing* body. The social gaze, the individual's self-reflection and accompanying self-consciousness, their affective and corporeal reactions; all are the enmeshed grounds of an individual's embodied experience, which influence their perceptions of their social world and informs their consequent actions. The absent and *dys-appearing* body orients the concept of embodiment within my thesis in relation to the individual's everyday experiences of their body, and how this might compare or contrast with how they use their body during a sport-for-development course. Other bodily concerns of participants might also be worthy of deliberation within my study, such as those arising from gender.

3.2.5 The gendered body

Throughout my outlining of my theoretical approach there is an emphasis placed upon the individual's essences of their experience. Such a focus seeks to understand the individual's *situatedness* within their experience, which involves an individual's interpretation of their social-structural characteristics (for example their age, race, and gender), and how their *situatedness* influences the meanings they ascribe to their social interactions. It is the individual's *situatedness* which makes each experience they encounter unique to them, thus ensuring the essences of their experience are personally specific to them. An oft-overlooked element of an individual's *situatedness* is the influence of their biological sex and gender (Allen-Collinson, 2011a). Indeed, phenomenology has been subjected to critique regarding the portrayal of male experience as neutral or universal (Fisher, 2000). Furthermore, Merleau-Ponty's account of the *lived body* has been queried regarding its lack of specificity of the bodies he analyses, as well as the absence of interrogation between the differences which occur between bodies, both of which lead to the

portrayal of the male white body as norm (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2009; Butler, 2006).

One of the first, and most notable, feminist critiques of phenomenology was by Simone de Beauvoir (e.g. 1989), who argues that women are commonly depicted as the *other* in society. She highlights how many aspects of both society and phenomenological thought rely on biological assumptions regarding femininity and womanhood, and instead discusses issues of female being-in-the-world. While de Beauvoir's work may be seen as comparing female being-in-the-world in a less favourable light to its male equivalent, her influential work has proved the catalyst for a wide range of gendered discussions of experiences, the *lived body*, and *embodiment* (Allen-Collinson, 2011a).

One such discussion is provided by Young (1980) in her phenomenological exploration of "throwing like a girl". Young discusses how female bodily comportment projects a woman's being-in-the-world through her motility. Drawing upon Merleau-Ponty's (1986) notion of the lived body, she purports that the ways in which females utilise their body within social spaces "may be particularly revelatory of the structures of female existence" (p. 140). As such, she argues that women's bodies are not only shaped by a patriarchal society which restricts female situatedness by inhibiting women's spatiality, but also become themselves situations and perform in particular ways, including the way they occupy space and move their bodies. While Young (1998) critiques her initial article as being overly-negative, and consequently discusses the positive influences of female social agency, her works showcase the need to consider gendered experiences and performances within social interactions. An individual's sport-for-development experience and physical engagement with the course delivery may be influenced by

their gendered encounters during the course, amongst both their peers and the tutors (as well as the researcher).

Further examples can be found within Allen-Collinson's (2010; 2011a) autophenomenographic accounts, which portray her own experiences as a female middle/long distance runner who trains within public spaces. Previous gendered critique has argued that public spaces are gendered (e.g. Wesely & Gaardner, 2004), with women's rights to access these spaces often challenged through verbal, visual, and physical harassment. Allen-Collinson provides richly-textured depictions which both support and contest this view. On the one hand, she discusses at length the feelings of empowerment and social agency training in public spaces provides her with. The invigorating elements of the outside world also contribute to sensations of strength, dynamism, and olfactory enjoyment within her experiences. However, she also notes how previous insalubrious experiences within such spaces have resulted in her bodily intentionality to be acutely aware of potential threats in situations she interprets as vulnerable. This leads to her corporeal engagement within her mind-body-world relationship to be brought into consciousness, which results in heightened attentiveness and attunement with her surroundings. Allen-Collinson's analysis of her experiences examines the linkages between individual experiential accounts of the lived body and aspects of the wider social-structuring frameworks of situatedness, and brings to light the significance gender in particular can play in understanding an individual's embodied experiences.

Much like phenomenology and symbolic interactionism, discussions of gendered experiences are diverse and contain myriad possibilities for exploring women's *embodied* experiences. However, by drawing from feminist-sociological phenomenology (Allen-Collinson, 2011a) I keep in mind the potential influence

gendered social structures may have upon individuals' experiences, and afford the space for individuals to describe the important influences upon their *situatedness* within their lifeworld. Thus, I draw from the works discussed above throughout my research in order to historically, structurally, and culturally situate the individual's bodily experience when discussing their engagement with sport-for-development.

3.2.6 Phenomenologically-orientated theory summary

The philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology, in particular Merleau-Ponty's existentialist writings, resonate strongly with the intentions of my study. I intend to maintain the phenomenological ethos throughout my study (as is discussed in Chapter 4: Kerry & Armour, 2000) by staying open to participants' accounts and by reflecting on my own preconceptions and experiences relating to the research. The focus of the results will be placed upon individuals' direct accounts of their understandings and descriptions of their sports leadership experience, rather than discussing data via pre-conceived categories or models, which distinguishes this study as phenomenologically-inspired rather than merely qualitative in nature (Allen-Collinson, 2009). Individuals' descriptions of their experiences are problematized through phenomenological concepts such as *intentionality* and *reversibility*, which are drawn from to explore individuals' intercorporeal experiences and how these might influence their interwoven mind-body-world relationship. The role of the body within an individual's experience, and the individual's perception of the body's influence, provides unique insight into their personalised understandings. Given the explicit expectations that participants are required to physically engage with their sport-for-development course, there is great potential for my study to explore participants' embodied experiences, and the influences these have on their identities, which to date has not been discussed in the sport-for-development literature. Throughout my discussions of embodiment, I have alluded to the close

theoretical ties which exist between embodiment, symbolic interactionism, and phenomenology; most pertinently, Merleau-Ponty's conception of the *lived body*. As the *lived body* is depicted as the root of an individual's perception and experience, insights into individuals' embodied sport-for-development experiences may enable deeper personalised accounts of their essential and situated structures to come to the fore. The inclusion of *dys*-embodiment and gendered understandings of embodiment also broadens my own understanding and awareness of personal circumstances, which may provide useful additional framing tools for my analysis. By bringing the body back into sport-for-development research, I seek to explore individuals' corporeal, cognitive, and affective experiences, and the influence these have within course attendees' lifeworlds.

3.3 Summary of theoretical chapter

This chapter provides details of the theoretical perspectives which constitute my phenomenologically-inspired approach. I outline the principles of symbolic interactionism and how key works, namely those of Goffman (1959; 1961a; 1961b; 1963; 1972; 1974) and Hochschild (1979;1983), are used to interrogate individuals' data regarding their sports leadership experiences. I also discuss the phenomenologically-inspired works of others which frame the understandings of my findings, such as those from existential-phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1968; 1986), embodiment (Csordas, 2008; Merleau-Ponty, 1986), flow (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990; Woodward, 2016), the *dys*-appearing body (Leder, 1990b), and the gendered body (Allen-Collinson, 2011a; Weiss, 1999; Young, 1980). These theoretical perspectives provide me with a combined lens which shapes and guides my analysis of individuals' personal experiences of the sports leadership course. These approaches provide me with a focus upon the individuals' mind-body-world experiences through the *lived body* concepts of *embodiment*, (*gendered*)

situatedness, and the *dys-appearing body*. I now move onto the methodological chapter where I discuss my paradigmatic positioning, ethnographic methodology, data collection methods, data analysis, and methodological reflections.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft agley, / An' lea'e us nought but grief
an' pain, / For promis'd joy! (Burns, 1786, p. 138)

Robert Burns' poem "Tae a Moose" includes the above quote, which seems appropriate for most research projects. While having a solid theoretical grounding is a prerequisite for good research, it can only provide minimal preparation for what to expect when entering the field of research. In order to address the gaps within the sport-for-development theory and literature identified in Chapters 2 and 3, I adopted an interpretivist approach which focused on the participants' sports leadership lived experiences, while also acknowledging the wider social influences. Specifically, a phenomenologically-inspired approach provided me with the opportunity to forefront the individuals' experiences and provide them with a voice about the influences of the sports leadership course.

This chapter provides a detailed account of the methodology, how the methods were undertaken, and how the data were analysed. Also, I offer some reflections about the research process, as although there were no particular examples of things going "agley" (Burns, 1786, p. 138) during my data collection period, there were instances where I encountered unanticipated scenarios. To close the chapter, I consider the ethical dilemmas which were considered beforehand, as well as those which arose during the data collection.

4.1 Research paradigms

4.1.1 *Positivism*

As acknowledged in Chapters 1 and 2, research into sport-for-development courses has predominantly been quantitative, reductionist, or reliant upon a singular

perspective in their approach, leading to the silencing of participants' voices regarding their course experiences (Deane *et al*, 2010; Eley & Kirk, 2002; Kay & Bradbury, 2009). All research is founded on philosophical assumptions about how the world is perceived and how one can best come to understand it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). These philosophical foundations are known as paradigms, which are an overarching set of beliefs about how the world is viewed (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These views inform how researchers go about conducting research. Most quantitative approaches are situated in a positivist paradigm, which is derived from the physics model of inquiry (Denscombe, 2014). This approach to research involves testing theories and hypotheses through careful observation and experimental manipulation of phenomena, commonly in comparison to a control group. Systematic procedures which use procedural objectivity to eliminate researchers' biases are utilised, with the aim of gaining empirical and measurable results (Denscombe, 2014). Methods such as randomised controlled trials and large-scale population surveys, movements such as evidence-based practice and the engineering model of research and practice, and models such as stimulus-response behaviours are founded upon these positivist principles.

Positivist approaches such as these might be useful in documenting numerical and causal data regarding, for example, participants' motives for undertaking sports volunteering courses, and what they go on to do after completing the course. However, they do not provide insight into the emotional journeys and meanings individuals associate with phenomena; in essence, their lived experiences of sport-for-development, and how these fit into participants' everyday lives, are often overlooked. To address my research questions outlined in Chapter 1, I adopted an interpretivist qualitative approach to explore the participants' engagement,

experiences, and points of connections and disconnections during the sports leadership courses.

4.1.2 Interpretivism and qualitative research

My interpretivist approach utilised qualitative methods, which offer the possibility of generating deep, personal, and descriptive data regarding phenomena. Typically, qualitative approaches are situated within the interpretivist paradigm, which is distinctive from positivism due to the nature of phenomena studied within it. Rather than seek universal causal relationships in the manner of positivist inquiry, instead interpretivist investigations posit that humans actively interpret their environment, leading to diverse beliefs and understandings of the world (Denscombe, 2014). To conduct interpretivist inquiry, an exploratory orientation from the researcher is required in order to try and understand an individual's interpretation of phenomena (Bryman, 2012). The individual's interpretations are considered to be shaped by the social, political, and cultural influences which they contribute to in their everyday lives, and so these require consideration from the researcher as well (Markula & Silk, 2011). Given that, an interpretivist study seeks to understand the individual's subjective interpretations of their experiences (Bryman, 2012), and so I followed the interpretative paradigm to guide the way in which I approached and wrote up the research. As detailed in the previous chapter, the epistemological principles of both phenomenology and symbolic interactionism are also concerned with the individual's interpretation of their personal knowledge, meanings and experiences of phenomena, which aligns with the principles of interpretivist and qualitative research approaches. As such, my research position was also informed by symbolic interactionism and phenomenologically-inspired theories, which, to varying extents, are oriented towards understanding how individuals construct meanings socially and experientially. My qualitative approach was apposite in addressing this type of

research query. I now turn to discuss the philosophical origins and principles of phenomenology, and how they will be used within my study. In doing so, I distinguish my research as being phenomenologically-inspired, as opposed to just 'qualitative' in nature (Kerry & Armour, 2000; Ray, 1994).

4.2 A phenomenologically-inspired approach

4.2.1 Philosophical underpinnings of phenomenology

Drawing from phenomenology, I keep in mind that "phenomenology is an attitude of attentiveness to the things of immediate experience" (Van den Berg, 1972, p. 77). Phenomenology is seen as both a methodology and a philosophical approach itself (Kerry & Armour, 2000). Modern phenomenology is often credited as stemming from the work of Edmund Husserl (Embree & Mohanty, 1997), who built upon Brentano's 'descriptive psychology' (1973) in response to the dominant scientific and objective approaches that were prevalent in the study of human existence at the time (Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2009; Kerry & Armour, 2000). Instead, Husserl advocates an approach which takes nothing for granted, in order to go back to the essential aspects that make up human experience, or *essences* (1970). Therefore, the primary aim of a phenomenological approach is to query that which is taken-for-granted, in order to examine the *essences* of an individual's consciousness and how these *essences* develop meanings through experiences (Kerry & Armour, 2000). Phenomenology is not a unified philosophical approach, however, as there are numerous competing and contested strands (e.g. Allen-Collinson, 2009; Ehrich, 1999; Merleau-Ponty, 1986). Embree & Mohanty (1997) discuss four main phenomenological movements comprising of *realist*, *constitutive/transcendental*, *hermeneutic*, and *existentialist* perspectives. I note that these four movements are not an all-encompassing portrayal of the history of phenomenology, due to the sheer

number of perspectives which overlap and interact with each other, but do provide a useful descriptive tool in charting the important ontologies of phenomenology.

Realist phenomenology is primarily concerned with the search for universal essences in human behaviour (Embree & Mohanty, 1997). Emphasis is placed upon individuals' *descriptions* of both real and ideal objects in an attempt to analyse the structure of human consciousness which is directed towards them, described as *intentionality*. Although realist phenomenology is largely attributed to Husserl's early work (*Logical Investigations*; 1973), these ideas were more fervently pursued by the 'Munich Group' of German philosophers (such as Johannes Daubert), with Husserl himself pursuing a more constitutive or transcendental form of phenomenology (Embree & Mohanty, 1997; Smith & Smith, 1995). This differs from the realist perspective as it is not concerned with applying what is found to the natural world. Instead, focus is placed solely upon the individual's intuitive experiences of phenomena in order to extract the essences of what they experience (Kerry & Armour, 2000). Constitutive/transcendental phenomenology largely stems from Husserl's work in *Ideas 1* (1983), which also strives to outline various techniques in order to achieve 'transcendental subjectivity' (Allen-Collinson, 2009; Embree & Mohanty, 1997). Methods such as *epochē* and *reduction* are introduced (which are discussed in section 4.3.3), with the aim of generating pure description of a phenomenon in order to reveal its essential qualities.

One of Husserl's students, Martin Heidegger, is a key proponent of hermeneutic phenomenology through his work in *Being and Time* (1962), and is often viewed as a dichotomous contrast to Husserl's constitutive/transcendental phenomenology (Kerry & Armour, 2000). The reason for this is because hermeneutic phenomenology not only has ontological differences, but also methodological.

Rather than focusing on description, like Husserl, Heidegger proposes that experience of phenomena is always interpreted, and so we cannot understand a phenomenon without also considering how it appears within its context (Allen-Collinson, 2009; Embree & Mohanty, 1997). Therefore, Heidegger's notions of the *hermeneutic circle* and *dasein* (or being-in-the-world) are antagonistic to Husserl's concepts of *epochē* and *reduction* (Kerry & Armour, 2000).

The Heideggerian or hermeneutic tradition involves interpreting the participants' accounts, as interpretation is seen as a natural part of human existence (or *dasein*), as experience can only be understood from each individual's being-in-the-world (Heidegger, 1962). Existentialist phenomenology also stems from Heidegger's hermeneutic phenomenological work, but was more widely taken up by French philosophers such as Gabriel Marcel, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Allen-Collinson, 2009). It is from this broad phenomenological movement that I draw philosophical, theoretical, and methodological inspiration from. I now outline the methodological implications of a phenomenologically-inspired approach.

4.2.2 The phenomenological method

The *phenomenological method* is not an explicit set of techniques, but is described as a certain attitude adopted by the researcher (e.g. Allen-Collinson, 2011b; Smith, 1992). For many researchers, Kerry and Armour (2000) describe it as the "phenomenological method *is* the phenomenological approach itself" (p. 8 [original emphasis]). This understanding is apt considering the variations which occur within phenomenology itself, as it is made up of different schools of thought advocating different tasks and goals (Cohen & Omery, 1994). However, phenomenological research consists of common concepts which attention is directed to; *essences*,

description, *epochē*, and *intentionality* (Allen-Collinson, 2011b; Kerry & Armour, 2000), which have been discussed elsewhere in the thesis.

While I made use of the aforementioned concepts within the phenomenologically-inspired method throughout my own research, this was not done through any form of systematic method. The specific ways in which phenomenological research can be undertaken is highly debatable, due to the open nature of phenomenology itself (Finlay, 2009). A prescriptive repertoire of methodological tools would be antithetical to the foundational philosophy of phenomenology (Mortari & Tarozzi, 2010). The lack of such formal guidance opens possibilities for researchers to utilise their own methodologies and methods within ‘the phenomenological attitude’ (Smith, 1992), although Gruppeta (2004) warns that phenomenological research should not rely on second hand accounts. Instead, the researcher should be involved in the research process in order to gain ‘insider experiential knowledge’ (Allen-Collinson, 2009, p. 291). I addressed this through using an ethnographic methodology for my study, which I move on to discuss in the next section.

While some researchers within psychology and sociology who have utilised the phenomenological method (e.g. Brymer & Schweitzer, 2013; Dale, 1996; Nesti, 2004) might suggest that *phenomenological interviews* could be used within research such as mine, I instead used a semi-structured, open-ended, and participant-led technique for my interviews. Phenomenological interviews are designed to focus solely upon the participant’s descriptions of their experiences regarding the phenomenon being researched, and typically involve only one question from the researcher followed by a more naturalistic conversation (for more details see Nesti, 2004, or Dale, 1996). However, when considering how phenomenological interviews might be used in my study, there were several

practical concerns which I pondered, such as the ability of participants in eloquently orating their descriptions during interviews. This would have required a high level of self-knowledge and self-efficacy from the participants in order to be comfortable in sharing their experiences with a relative stranger. The demanding nature of phenomenological interviews was, therefore, deemed inappropriate for my study, mainly due to the anticipated young age of the participants, as Sports Leaders UK's target audience is typically between ages 16-21 (as seen in appendix A). There were also operational considerations which detracted from using phenomenological interviews, such as the time required for an engaging encounter to take place (Nesti, 2004). Therefore, I took a pragmatic approach to my interviews (Alvesson, 2002) by making them semi-structured in nature, but kept the phenomenological attitude in mind throughout my data collection by ensuring the interviews remained open-ended and participant-led, in order to fore-front the participants' voices.

4.3 Ethnography

4.3.1 Ethnographic principles

Prior to the data collection phase, I conducted a Foucauldian deconstructive discourse analysis of sport-for-development documents and artefacts, the details and findings of which are outlined in appendix A. Following this, I undertook a phenomenologically-inspired ethnographic study to collect data in the field, which was aimed at gaining a fuller picture of the research phenomenon of sport-for-development courses. Ethnographies involve the holistic study of people and cultures (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The term ethnography can evoke varied responses from different audiences. It is applied to a wide range of qualitatively led research methods, and crosses many semantic boundaries with other, yet different, methods such as case studies, interpretive methods, and life histories (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Ethnography can be loosely defined as a first-hand experience

of a social environment within a certain location that attempts to transmit the subjective lived reality of those who inhabit it (Pole & Morrison, 2003).

Ethnography aligns with phenomenology as it focuses on the generation of in-depth data and rich descriptions regarding individuals' experiences and identity. Indeed, the term "phenomenology-based ethnography" has been discussed in its own right (e.g. Vom Lehn & Hitzler's [2015] special issue of the same title) within the realm of ethnographic methodologies. The foundation of this approach can be found in Schutz's (1967) sociological-phenomenological analyses of the *lifeworld*, which is concerned with understandings individuals' meaning making in everyday life. Phenomenology-based ethnography, therefore, seeks to investigate individuals' perspectives of the lifeworld they encounter, which is to be examined through the researcher's own participation and/or observation in (and consequent reflection of) the same environment (Vom Lehn & Hitzler, 2015). Although phenomenology might be considered as a paradigm in its own right and distinctive from ethnography and the interpretivist paradigm, in this instance the sociological-phenomenological approach contributes methodologically to the ethnographic approach to data collection, and theoretically to the data analysis.

The main characteristic of ethnography is the exploration of cultural groups within their natural settings (O'Leary, 2004). Silverman (2006) views ethnography as an attempt to see what is going on in a particular setting, and recommends that the researcher observes, listens, and records. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) take this recommendation further, suggesting that the researcher asks questions within the research setting in order to shed new light on the research issues, as well as observing the natural setting. Delamont (2004) concurs, as she argues that by talking to the observed populations the research and researcher is better able to

capture what they are thinking, saying, and experiencing about their world. By adopting an 'exploratory orientation' (Van Maanen, 1988), I, the researcher, aimed to describe the meanings behind the social processes that were observed in a way that remained true to the reality of the events, yet revealed more general truths regarding those involved in the sports leadership experience (i.e. the participants and tutors) and how they relate to the wider social world (Hammersley, 1992). In order to convey these meanings, the findings covered several layers of reality, classifications, categories, and representations, in what is known as 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973). A thick description of the sports leadership courses allowed me to explore the journey that participants experienced.

4.3.2 Ethnographic procedure

Overall, my ethnographic study took place over 11 months, and was based in the North West of England. It utilised the methods of observations and interviews, the details of which are outlined in section 4.4. To gain a thick description, researchers have argued that a variety of data sources should be used to develop a multi-layered, rich, and thorough account of the research environment (Delamont, 2004; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; O'Leary, 2004). A range of methods provides greater access to the variety of actions and occurrences which naturally take place in the research setting (Yin, 2003). The same argument is also true of ethnographies which continuously capture data over a period of time, as the research provides a view of the dynamic temporal cycle of the phenomena being studied, rather than just a static snapshot (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). I took all these aspects into consideration for my methodological approach, to provide a full and rich account of the participants' sport-for-development experiences. In ethnography, 'being there' as a researcher is a key facet (Alvesson, 2002), as the researcher is able to observe participants' actions within a 'natural' environment (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

My immersion within the field of the sports leadership courses meant I contributed to the social and cultural context of the sports leadership course. My interactions with, and observations of, the participants enhanced my empathetic understanding of their experiences, and therefore encouraged a greater sense of 'I-thou' rather than 'I-it' encounters with the participants throughout the research process (Buber, 1958).

With continued engagement and immersion within the research environment, I hoped to be seen as less threatening. I did this by recognising myself as what DeWalt and DeWalt's (2010) typology of participant observation calls a 'moderate participant'. This meant that although I was known to the course participants as a researcher and was predominantly there to observe rather than participate, I also engaged the participants in informal conversations and took notes in different spaces throughout the research location, which helped to quell any 'authority' myth which might have occurred (although not entirely, as described in section 4.3.4). This positioning also meant I had to reflect continuously on my position as insider/outsider, as I seemed to be in what Dwyer and Buckle (2009) term as "the space between" (p. 60). As an insider, I gained knowledge relating to the insider world of sports leadership training, but maintained an outsider perspective by questioning events and practices as a researcher (Woodward, 2008).

For my research, I heeded Finlay's (2009) advice regarding phenomenological debates concerning description and interpretation (see section 4.2.1), in that it need not be a dichotomous choice between a Husserlian transcendental approach or Heideggerian hermeneutic approach. Rather, I positioned myself within the continuum by highlighting the role of the empathetic 'I-thou' encounter (Buber, 1958). This involved attempting to reduce the boundaries between myself and the

participant by attempting to see the world in the same way as they see it, through techniques such as active listening and talking to them in their everyday language. As Maslow (1968) argues, only by attempting to experience the world of those we wish to investigate can we begin to understand the world they live in, the experiences they face, the influences upon them, and the meanings they ascribe to them. Therefore, by making a conscious effort to understand each participant's life circumstances, I attempted to invest myself into each interview setting by reflecting on my own presuppositions and judgements regarding my sports leadership course experiences before each interview (which are detailed in Chapter 5), in order to engage more fully with the participant's descriptions of their experiences.

4.3.3 Researcher reflexivity and epochē

Another contested, but important facet of the phenomenological method is *epochē*, which requires the researcher to 'bracket' or 'reduce' their presuppositions regarding the phenomena being researched (Nesti, 2004). The Husserlian or transcendental movement argues that in order to understand the descriptions of the essential aspects of an experience, or 'to go back to the things themselves' (Husserl, 1983), the researcher must suspend their own *a priori* knowledge and attitudes as much as possible in order to view the descriptions as naively as possible (Cohen & Omery, 1994). However, both the hermeneutic and existential schools of thought challenge the notion of any individual to be completely neutral to phenomena. Heidegger's notion of *dasein* (1962) emphasises the individual contextualisation of life, and that we are constantly in and of the world, thus any separation of ourselves from our being-in-the-world is problematic. Merleau-Ponty concurs that full reduction is impossible (1969), although there is debate as to whether he completely rejects the idea of epochē or simply the idea of full epochē being possible (Allen-Collinson, 2011b).

Given this, I approached the research by engaging in 'reflexive bracketing' (Ahern, 1999) in order to identify my own personal biases and attitudes regarding the phenomena being researched. This involved a process of self-reflection and critical questioning of my own experiences of sport and sport development settings, which I outlined in Chapter 1. My reflections regarding my own rather mixed experiences within sport highlighted my suppositions about those who typically choose to engage in sport-for-development settings; that they may possess similar bullying characteristics to those who I encountered during my adolescence, such as arrogance, self-importance, and intimidating personal qualities. To assist further in this process, my supervisors asked me to problematise and question each aspect of the research setting. This helped me to identify myself as a white, working class, male in his mid-20s throughout the data collection phase. This meant that I might have been older than most of the course attendees and of a similar age to some of the tutors, which might have resulted in me being seen as an authority figure. My association with Sports Leaders UK may have accentuated this, as although I had not engaged with any Sports Leaders UK training prior to my studies, I may have been seen as 'sent from head office' to check how the courses were being run. While it is true that I planned to assess the courses and their impact, it was to view what constituted good practice rather than to monitor each course, and I made attempts to emphasise my independent role as a researcher throughout my engagements with the participants. For example, whenever the course attendees asked me for advice regarding the quality of their work, I would profess that I did not know enough about the course materials to be able to pass judgement, and instead recommended that they ask a tutor. Despite this, I felt my presence within their sport-for-development experience seemed to be associated with some form of ambiguity and judgement (see section 5.3 for more reflections), and so I anticipated a degree of

wariness, neutrality, and appeasement during my interactions with the course attendees.

In ethnography, the concept of reflexivity is considered not just good practice, but as a necessary process amongst qualitative researchers (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Reflexivity involves the researcher being able to recognise the position they adopt within the social world they research, and how this might subsequently affect their findings. It has been argued that it is impossible to ever assume a completely objective viewpoint in which the researcher bears no influence whatsoever on their research environment (Nesti, 2004). Therefore, by being continuously aware and conscious of the impact they may have on their research environment, a researcher can increase the trustworthiness of their findings and conclusions (Hammersley, 2004). I considered the implications that could have arisen due to being present in the research environment throughout my observational notes (Delamont, 2008), in addition to my engagement with epoché and reflexive bracketing.

4.3.4 Ethical considerations

Prior to starting the study, ethical approval was granted by the Open University Human Research Ethics Committee. Throughout the research design process and data collection period due diligence was given to the ethical guidelines provided by The Open University Human Research Ethics Committee, as well as those outlined by the British Sociological Association (BSA) and British Education Research Association (BERA).

All the participants in my study were assigned pseudonyms to ensure their anonymity. Furthermore, the specific locations and boroughs where the observations of the sports leadership courses took place were anonymised to further

protect the identity of the participants. Informed consent was sought from every participant (the information sheet and consent form can be seen in appendices E and F). To encourage participation and retention with the study, I offered an incentive of a £25 amazon voucher to the course attendees who participated with the cyclical interviews, as it required a substantial amount of their time over the course of a number of months (see Grant & Sugarman, 2004, for a debate on the use of incentives for in human participation research). The data collected from the research were electronically stored on my personal password-protected computer, which did not enter the data collection field and was kept in a secure location.

While every measure was taken to ensure all ethical procedures were adhered to, there were a couple of considerations that are worthy of reflection at this point. The first relates to my participation in some of the activities during the sports leadership courses. This only occurred when the tutors and participants encouraged me to do so, although it led to the unforeseen situation of my hand-written observation notes being exposed to prying eyes. I attempted to remedy this by placing my notes in my bag whenever I left them, and I did not encounter any instances of individuals reading through them. However, during the Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre course one participant (Isabelle) made several attempts to look at the notes in a semi-tongue-in-cheek manner. While a combination of professional insistence, humour, and indecipherable handwriting eventually dissuaded her from persisting, it did raise my awareness of and concern for the privacy of my observational notes.

Another instance worthy of ethical consideration was my initial proposal to use social media within my study. While ethical clearance was given to include the use of Facebook, with the justification of it being another contact space between me and the participants, the reality of its inclusion proved more problematic than beneficial.

For a start, most participants were uncomfortable with the idea and opted out of the social media element of the study (as separate consent and information sheets were provided). However, after the first participant agreed to participate through Facebook, I immediately felt uncomfortable with the amount of exposure on my (semi) private life. After a discussion with the participant it was revealed they felt the same way, and so the social media element to the study was abandoned. I believe the use of social media could prove a fruitful source in similar investigations, which is a point I elaborate on in Chapter 8. However, any social media element would need to be integrated more centrally into the research design at the conceptual stage, rather than be added as a supplementary data source, as was the case for my study, with further appropriate ethical discussions.

4.3.5 Participants and sampling

In total, I observed the delivery of four different level 2 community sports leadership award courses. Each of these courses took place in a different location, although all of them were situated within the Greater Manchester area. I came to engage with these courses through a 'snowball sampling' procedure (Noy, 2008). Initially, Sports Leaders UK sent out a recruitment email which I constructed through their mailing list of tutors and course organisers in the North West of England. This led to me contacting two tutors, one of whom agreed to be part of the research. While collecting data on the course, the tutor gave me the contact details for another local tutor, who subsequently agreed to participate in the research, and again provided me with another contact to follow up. I detail each course individually in chronological order in appendix G. Pseudonyms were assigned to the location names in order to protect the identity of the organisations and individuals who took part. I provide more specific information about how the courses were run, and contextual data of the courses, in Chapter 5.

A total of thirty-eight interviews were conducted with sixteen participants. Eleven of these were course participants, who were the focus of cyclical interviews over an extended period of time. The other five participants were the tutors from each course, who were each interviewed once. An 'opportunity sample' (Brady, 2006) was used in recruiting the participants from the courses. In practice, this involved me asking each cohort for participants towards the end of each observation of the sports leadership courses, during which time I was able to build up a certain level of rapport and trust with the course attendees. The details of the participants and their interviews are provided in appendix H. Pseudonyms were used for all the participants and any identifying features were changed or omitted to protect the identity of those involved.

4.4 Methods

4.4.1 Observations

Observations involve the researcher witnessing first-hand the actions, behaviours, and interactions of individuals within the field of research (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). During these courses, I made hand-written notes while simultaneously observing the courses (Blaxter *et al*, 2008). An open-ended approach was adopted as it aligned more closely to my phenomenologically-inspired approach. Such an approach enabled me to witness aspects of the participants' experiences which they may not have been able to vocalise during interviews, such as their body language, social interactions, physical expressions, and subtle behaviours (Goffman, 1959) within the immediate vicinity of the sports leadership courses. There were occasions on each course where I participated in some of the activities, and so it was not possible to make notes immediately. On these occasions the notes of these activities were written up as soon as possible afterwards. The hand-written notes

were typed up in rough form at the end of each day of observations, in order to ensure any significant moments were still fresh in my memory. These notes were later written into more coherent and evocative first person narrative accounts with additional descriptions and reflections included. An example of these notes can be seen in appendix C. Drawing upon the advice of Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) and Delamont (2008), I made observation notes of what was going on, and what the participants appeared to think was going on, what they did, how they did it, and how it affected them. Notes were taken not only about incidents or specific moments, but also about things that appeared normal or routine, both to me and the courses attendees, in order to build up a fuller cultural picture of each course. Aspects such as the course size, the number of tutors, their demographics, ages, clothing, arrival time, language used, demeanour, location of the course, size of the rooms used, shape, smells, appropriateness, artefacts, notices, and equipment used were all recorded. This enabled me to build up a description of each sports leadership course which utilised more senses than just sight, in order to engage the reader and share my experiences with them (Pink, 2007). As the number of observations increased, and in turn I became more experienced with the art of note taking, the focus of the notes narrowed towards the emergent themes that become apparent during the iterative process of the research.

In order to avoid my observation notes becoming purely descriptive, they were consequently written up in the form of a first-person narrative. This entailed my own reflections from the research field, in a manner akin to an autoethnographic account (for an overview see Ellis *et al*, 2010). Autoethnographic research focuses on the researcher's own reflexive experiences of a cultural place or group, where the individual can reflect on their unique position within a cultural setting, and consider the *essences* of their experiences within it (Esping, 2010). This is not to be confused

with autophenomenography, where the researcher is instead concerned with their experiences of a particular phenomenon (for more see Allen-Collinson, 2011b). Although my process was not as rigorous or detailed as a full autoethnography, it was conducive to the research methodology as it acknowledged my active immersion within the research environment, and provided a space for me to reflect upon the more nuanced individual behaviours I observed (Ellis, 2004). The reflective process and ensuing first person narrative also provided a more engaging and fuller description of the participants' sport-for-development experiences than that which was portrayed solely through interviews.

4.4.2 Interviews

Interviews involve the researcher questioning or conversing with a participant about topics relating to the research question, which can be done through several different approaches (Blaxter *et al*, 2008). My own approach to interviews was influenced by Kvale's (1996, p.3-4) 'traveller' metaphor regarding interview techniques. This allegory depicts the researcher as a wanderer amongst a landscape that constitutes the research environment, who enters conversations and listens to tales from the locals, or participants. Upon their return, the traveller then regales these conversations and tales in their own language in order to make sense of them. This approach provided a balance between rigid, structured interview techniques and more spontaneous conversations. It also enabled the participants to recount their lived experiences in their own language, an important consideration in a phenomenologically-inspired approach (May, 1977; Polkinghorne, 1989).

My position regarding interviews also placed me between the two interview perspectives which Alvesson (2002) refers to as 'romanticism' and 'localism' (p. 108-114). Romanticism is oriented towards exploring the inner worlds of the participants

and the experiences they have assimilated from their own social reality, which can be achieved through building up trust, generating rapport, and empathetic human interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. Localism positions interviews as structured interactions that have little meaning or worth outside of the interview environment within which they have been created, meaning that a temporal and location specific dialogue is all that is produced (Dingwall, 1997; Murphy *et al*, 1998; Silverman, 1993; 1997).

While both views have support within the research community, it is possible to accept that both perspectives can be considered and a compromise can be achieved, as recognised by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007). I argue that although it is true interviews produce a temporal and location specific dialogue, it would be churlish to disregard the information presented during an interview. All research possesses the characteristics of providing an artificial environment with a possible perceived power imbalance to some extent, simply through the presence of the researcher (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The temporary position of power assumed by the researcher in interviews, which contrasts to the striving of equality during observations (which was sought through my “moderate participation” [DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010] during the courses [see section 4.3.2]), is something that can be capitalised on by the researcher. Various forms of data can be elicited from the participant specifically regarding the research phenomena at hand. Interviews allow individuals a space in which to discuss their own social experiences and realities, something that is quite rare in everyday life, and which usually results in sincere and reflective accounts regarding the phenomena being explored (Forsey, 2008).

Interviews were therefore conducted with a number of participants from each course I observed. The purpose of the qualitative interviews was to gain an insight into the

individual's sense of self, how this might have been influenced by the sports leadership course, and any resulting effect on their identity. Combined with my observation notes, this insight allowed for the unique experiences of both the researcher and participants to be included within ethnographic research (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Leech, 2002). The use of a cyclic interview process provided my study with a longitudinal element which followed individuals through their sports leadership journey.

Each interview with the participants took place in a public location of their choosing, and was audio recorded with their permission. The interviews were semi-structured, open-ended, and participant-led in their nature. This means that although I typically asked each participant the same opening question, and had an interview guide which contained specific areas to ask about, the interviewee was free to meander through the discussion of any subjects they felt was important. This flexibility was inspired by the phenomenological method described in section 4.2.2 (see Dale, 1996). It also resulted in each interview varying in length, with the shortest interview lasting twenty minutes and the longest ninety minutes, although the average length was around forty-five minutes. An example of an interview guide can be seen in appendix D. After each interview, I transcribed the audio recording myself, ensuring that my transcripts provided "relevant and accurate descriptive materials" to assist in answering my research questions (Hammersley, 2010, p. 566). Member checking was offered to the participants so they could check I accurately depicted what they said, which is suggested as good practice by qualitative researchers (e.g. Yilmaz, 2013), but none took up this option.

One noticeable absence from the interview participants were those from the Sternwood Training Ground course. This was due to the sports leadership element

of the Princes' Trust course taking place during week five of a twelve-week programme, meaning the cohort were still fully engaged with other activities for a further six weeks. The group also consisted of socially vulnerable youths, meaning requests for personal details and arranging private one-to-one meetings with them proved too complex. However, some insight into their progression after the course was provided by interviewing the course tutor, who was able to provide information on each individual two months after the Princes' Trust course had been completed.

4.5 Analysis and results

4.5.1 Data analysis

The data were analysed in a phenomenological manner which drew upon Dale's (1996) outlining of phenomenological study, which appears to be at a median point on the continuum between Giorgi's (1985) transcendentially-influenced guide to phenomenological analysis, and the hermeneutically-inspired interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA - see Smith, 2004). Such an analysis involved "focusing on the text" (Dale, 1996, p. 314) in an inductive manner, which began with my immersion in the data. I engaged in the data by moving back and forth between parts and the whole of the data over the course of several readings (Finlay, 2014). Small parts of the data then emerged as *meaning units*, which were progressively elaborated upon to provide deeper meaning regarding the research phenomena through *clustering* (Dale, 1996). These clusters were subjected to the ongoing dialectic between the original data and the researcher's reflections, and were critically scrutinised with the help of my doctoral supervisors. The clusters were then grouped into *themes*, which portrayed the "fundamental structure of the data" (Dale, 1996, p. 315). These themes provided the basis for my consequent theoretical interpretations, which made use of the theoretical works discussed in Chapter 3. However, throughout the analysis I placed emphasis upon the participants own

experiential accounts of the phenomena, and the contextualising factors of their wider life experiences and my own reflective observational data. NVivo software was used to store my data analysis.

As the data collection period took place over an extended period of time, this iterative process of gathering data, conducting analysis, then gathering more data helped to refine and focus the subsequent field notes and interviews, although an open-ended approach which focused on the participants' meanings of their sports leadership experiences was still adopted. My approach to analysing the data was mostly inductive; however, researchers have argued that all research involves both inductive and deductive processes to some extent, meaning it is invalid to claim that only one approach was used (Biddle *et al*, 2001; Côté *et al*, 1993). As such, the deductive elements of my study can be identified as stemming from my observations and the deconstructive discourse analysis of sport-for-development websites in appendix A, as these provided me with some form of thematic guidance as to what questions to ask in interviews and aspects to look for in my observations. The research questions themselves also provided a deductive element to most studies, as they identify certain areas the researcher is attempting to establish within the data. However, I placed more of an emphasis on the inductive nature of my analysis, as this enabled me to reflect on any prior knowledge of the research phenomena in relation to the original data garnered.

4.5.2 Generalisability, representation and evaluation in qualitative research

When considering the generalisability of qualitative research, there is debate regarding the extent to which findings may be applicable to wider contexts. For instance, Ellingson (2011) and Stake (1995) have argued that the complex nature of cultural dimensions and human nature creates a multitude of social purposes and

realities which exist, rendering generalisations across wide populations as inappropriate. In response, Hammersley (1992) cautions the qualitative researcher in generalising theoretical inference, as it contradicts the common ethnographic assumption of the questionable existence of universal, deterministic sociological laws. However, he suggests that empirical generalisations can be proposed if sensible decisions about the population of the generalisation are made. I drew upon such advice by being aware of the individual nature of the social settings I investigated, reflected on the possible generalisable aspects I found, and considered the populations any generalisations might be applicable to within my results and conclusions. However, the main focus remained on individuals' accounts of their sport-for-development experiences, which was encouraged through a phenomenologically-inspired approach.

Another issue in qualitative research identified by postmodernist writers (e.g. Alvesson, 2002; Fine *et al*, 2000; Hertz, 1997) is how research is represented in the author's findings. How research is written is an important consideration for ethnographies (Wolf, 1992), as well as phenomenologically-inspired research (Smith, 1992). The 'voice' of the text requires careful consideration, as there is always a trade-off between the researcher's voice and those who are researched (Alvesson, 2002). As described by Hertz (1997), voice is "a struggle to figure out how to present the author's self while simultaneously writing the respondents' accounts and representing their selves" (p. xi-xii). Therefore, thought must be given as to how to depict the events that constitute the research.

Some fields advocate assuming the position of a 'loud-voice approach' (Alvesson, 2002, p. 130) where the researcher takes the side of those assumed to be under-represented in society, such as the working class or minority and ethnic groups.

However, this approach has been criticised by others (e.g. Fine *et al*, 2000) who argue that a singular voice is not an accurate representation of society; to provide a singular alternative voice is to reduce the argument to a dichotomy. Instead, it is proposed by Alvesson (2002) that the researcher is aware of all voices present within the research, including those who are marginalised and those who are not, and everyone in between. I attempted to heed this advice as much as possible within my writing by being sensitive to my role within the research, as demonstrated by my reflections throughout this thesis. I strove to make the multiple voices of the participants heard, as well as my own voice as a researcher and contributor to the research setting. My multi-modal approach to data collection enabled greater opportunities for the participants' voices and actions to be recognised, and provided me with ample space to consider my own participation.

As well as concerns around the representation of the research, it is also prudent to consider how to evaluate qualitative research. The issues of validity and reliability within qualitative research have typically involved comparisons with positivist research (where these terms originated from), leading to interpretivist researchers adapting these terms (e.g. Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Sarantakos, 1994). However, with the emergence of postmodernism there has been a shift away from more traditional conventions of validity and reliability, or 'facts' or 'truth'. The blurring of these boundaries has led to researchers striving for a greater balance between 'scientific' and 'evocative' writing, a balance which has always been a consideration for ethnographers (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). In turn, more thought is given as to how the quality of a piece of qualitative or ethnographic research might be considered as trustworthy, credible and accurate (Sparkes & Smith, 2009). For example, Richardson (2000) presents her own take on how she evaluates ethnographies, which includes the research making a substantive contribution,

having aesthetic merit, the author demonstrating reflexivity, making an impact, and expressing a reality. These criteria are derived from a desire to encompass both analytical integrity and creative representations within research. Furthermore, guidance on methodological trustworthiness within phenomenologically-inspired research is provided by Heidegger's (1962) concept of truth as *unconcealment* (Kerry & Armour, 2000; Ray, 1994). This involves both the researcher's descriptions and interpretations being disseminated in an appropriate and meaningful way. The reader of the research must be able to relate to the findings in an emotional as well as intelligible way. I kept both of these evaluation criteria in mind throughout my research process, and draw upon them to evaluate my work in Chapter 8.

4.6 Summary of Methodology

Within this chapter I outlined the paradigmatic roots of my thesis, before discussing the philosophical underpinnings of the key facets of my phenomenologically-inspired approach. I described my ethnographic methodology and reflected on ethical issues, as well as my immersion into the field of research. I justified and described my data collection techniques of observations and interviews, and how these enabled me to better understand what a sports leadership journey involves for individuals. The analysis of the data is detailed, before the question of how qualitative research might be evaluated is considered.

While I provide information on the locations and participants that make up the data within this chapter, there are challenges in being able to describe the differences between the rhetoric of data collection and the reality of my experiences. In order to convey my ethnography in more detail, Chapter 5 focuses on my reflections of my own sports leadership journey, in order to display the wide variety of courses and people which I encountered. I write about my own lived experiences during my

engagement in the field of research to unconceal (Ray, 1994) the *essences* of the sport-for-development experiences. By bringing these into being, I aim to 'see' the important moments and aspects (Van Manen, 1997) which enhance our understanding of what it means to participate in a sport-for-development course. Chapter 5 considers my ethnographic reflections from my time in the field, and is the first of three results chapters that combine my findings and analysis.

Chapter 5: Being in the Field and Critical Reflections

I slowly realise that I should have asked Stanley these questions during our meeting.

Now that opportunity has gone I have to figure out these answers for myself, using only the clues that I pick up on from my seat. (Observation notes)

The second part of the thesis consists of three chapters which focus on the results, followed by a conclusions chapter. This chapter consists of my own reflections as an ethnographic researcher within the field, and I consider my relationship to the participants during the data collection. I begin by placing the research in context within the Greater Manchester metropolitan area to paint a picture of where the data collection took place. I then move onto my reflections from each of the sports leadership courses I attended and introduce the research participants whom I interviewed. Finally, I draw together the noticeable trends and themes which arose from my own sports leadership course experiences.

5.1 The research locations

The research took place in four data collection sites, which were located in two boroughs of the metropolitan county of Greater Manchester – Hillside and Municipa⁷. At the time of the data collection, the county of Greater Manchester was a large and diverse metropolitan area within the United Kingdom, with a population of 2.68 million⁸ people making it the third most populous county behind the West Midlands and London, and an area covering 493 square miles (1,277 km²) making it the second largest conurbation. Of the 2.68 million population, approximately 212,000 people lived in the borough of Hillside and 234,000 lived in the borough of

⁷ The names of the boroughs, townships, and course locations within this research have been assigned pseudonyms for the benefit of participants' anonymity.

⁸ The data in this paragraph are based on statistics garnered from the 2011 Census (Office for National Statistics, 2011).

Municipa. The industrialised nature of Greater Manchester meant that there was a legacy of continued poverty and deprivation levels. Greater Manchester was ranked as the fourth most deprived area overall in the United Kingdom in 2010, as well as being second in terms of income deprivation, and third in terms of employment deprivation (The Manchester Partnership, 2013). The rates of unemployment, youth unemployment, and long term unemployed were 34%, 17%, and 6% higher proportionally than the national averages respectively (see table 1 in appendix I). The culture and influence of sport was inescapable in Greater Manchester, with a number of stadiums, facilities, and venues being located within the region. The most prominent sporting examples from the area were the two football teams, Manchester City and Manchester United, as well as several other high level football teams, such as Bolton Wanderers and Wigan Athletic. The amount of green space area in Greater Manchester (82.9% of total area) was similar to the rest of England (87.5%), which suggests there were plenty of outdoor recreation opportunities available (see table 3 in appendix I). However, these figures changed considerably when viewing each borough where the sports leadership courses took place.

5.1.1 Hillside borough

Hillside borough provided the setting for three of the four sports leadership courses; both the Morningside Community Centre and Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre courses were located within the Central township of the borough, with the Pencey FE College course taking place in the Lakeview township. All the course attendees who were interviewed resided within the Hillside borough, and ten of these eleven also grew up in this area (it was only Nick who moved to Hillside when he was a teenager). Furthermore, three of the five tutors who were interviewed lived within the Hillside borough, and all five had grown up in the surrounding areas.

The borough of Hillside did not compare favourably to the overall statistics of Greater Manchester in a number of relevant areas. For instance, the total amount of green space decreased from 82.9% in Greater Manchester as a whole to 72.4% in Hillside. Additionally, unemployment and youth unemployment were 69% and 50% higher respectively, with long term unemployment also being 35% higher in Hillside compared to Greater Manchester (see appendix I). However, it is misleading to portray the whole of Hillside as being rife with social discord, as it also possessed areas of affluence which can be identified by comparing super output areas from the borough (see appendix J). For example, the population density of different areas within Hillside showed divergence, with one of the most deprived areas having 41.7 people per hectare compared to just 3.5 people per hectare in more rural areas. Additionally, the area of green space ranged from only 25.1% of the most deprived populated areas in Hillside, which jumped to 86.8% of the area being green space in more affluent areas. These figures provide some indication regarding the participants' environment and spatial contexts of their everyday lives.

5.1.2 Municipa

Only the Sternwood Training Ground course took place within the Municipa borough, which was located in the Keybay ward. Although none of the course attendees were able to be interviewed for the research, the tutor of the course (Phillip) did mention that five of the seven attendees lived in nearby areas, with the other two having to travel further from similarly deprived areas. Additionally, two of the five tutors whom I interviewed lived within the Municipa borough, although not in the Keybay ward, and neither grew up in this particular area.

As with the Hillside borough, the statistics for Municipa indicated that it was one of the more socially deprived areas of Greater Manchester. For example, the total area

of green space for Muncipa decreased from Greater Manchester's 82.9% to just 55.7%. Unemployment was also an issue in Muncipa, with total unemployment being 48% higher than the average for the county. Additionally, youth unemployment was 25% higher and long term unemployment 24% higher in Muncipa in comparison with the figures for Greater Manchester as a whole (see appendix I). Again, similarly to Hillside, there were notable differences across wards within Muncipa which indicated contrasting areas of affluence and social deprivation. For instance, those classed as economically active varied between 46% and 68.7% across different wards in Muncipa, and the population who owned their accommodation ranged from 26.5% to 85.7% (see appendix J).

5.2 The sports leadership courses

I now move on to discuss my experiences of the four sports leadership courses themselves. I do this in chronological order and by utilising a 1st persona narrative approach at times, in order to convey my own research journey to the reader. As I had only experienced one form of educational setting before, I began my data collection journey questioning how the sports leadership courses might differ from my own educational experiences, and whether each course would be run consistently. I soon realised this was not the case, and that the differing contexts of each course played a significant role in the participants' sports leadership experiences. The flexible nature of the sports leadership course was a characteristic advertised on the Sports Leaders UK website (see appendix A), in order to make the courses more appealing to customers. What was not included on the website was what this variety means to the participants of the courses. The adaptable disposition of the course meant it was used in a variety of settings, for different motivations, and targeted a range of populations. This variety of usage was exacerbated by the course organisers using the course to address different needs

within their location, and by the tutors, who themselves differed in job roles, motivations, and experiences. Such a large amount of variability made a universal description or definition of what a sports leadership course is almost impossible, although the Sports Leaders UK learning outcomes provided some uniform guidance in analysing the delivery of each course (see appendix B).

To reiterate the position I assumed during the data collection, which I detailed in Chapter 4, I was not a fully active participant during the courses who took part in all the activities and exercises. Instead, I was what DeWalt and DeWalt (2010) describe as a 'moderate participant', and what I considered to be 'socially active'. This involved joining in with selective activities, for instance the initial 'icebreakers', in order to build up a sense of rapport and familiarity with the participants. For the majority of the course, however, I was sat or stood to the side of the session in order to write my observation notes. I felt that it was important for me to remain visible to the participants while I wrote my notes to distinguish myself as a researcher, as well as to foster a sense of trust and openness. My position as an ethnographic researcher could also be considered through what Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) describe as my "field relations" (p. 63), and my own attempts at "impression management" (p. 66). I was keen to strike the right balance in terms of how I came across during the data collection – friendly, but not overly friendly; inquisitive, but not ignorant; professional, but not too formal. Most importantly of all, I wanted to ensure that the course attendees recognised me as an independent researcher, not as someone who had come to assess them or as someone from Sports Leaders UK. I tried to maintain a tricky balance between being part insider, part outsider within the field (Woodward, 2008). I also intended to fulfil what Garfinkel (2002) describes as the "unique adequacy requirement" (p. 175), in that the ethnographer

should be familiar with the context within which their data are 'produced', which in this research refers predominantly to the delivery of the sports leadership courses.

5.2.1 Pencey FE College

Arriving at Pencey FE College

I arrived at Pencey FE College for my first sports leadership course with a feeling of slight trepidation as I entered my first research field as an ethnographer. This anxious feeling was exacerbated by my bus journey to the location, where my self-consciousness was heightened through the realisation that I could not pass for a 16-17 year-old anymore. Aside from the beginnings of a hopefully premature midlife crisis, this realisation made me consider how I had dressed – was I dressed too formally so that I might be perceived as a college tutor, or was I dressed too informally so that I could conceivably be seen as a mature student? It is exactly this kind of detail which I had read about in books such as Hammersley and Atkinson's (2007), which provided numerous considerations for 'novice' ethnographers such as myself. However, I had almost instantaneously realised that reading about ethnography and doing ethnography are very different activities.

The first feature that struck me about the college were the old-fashioned buildings which were used. Indeed, as I was led to the room where the sports leadership course was starting, the archaic make-up of these buildings generated an oppressive coldness before the sessions even begin. As I made my way through the college, I left the modern surroundings of the main building and walked up a slight incline towards the rear of the campus, where two imposing buildings were found side by side. Their dull brown bricks continued vertically for what must have been seven or eight stories, and reminded me of a Victorian cotton mill as depicted in an L. S. Lowry painting. I entered the building on the right through a vast doorway,

into an interior consisting of grimy cream walls and dull dark green carpets, both of which looked as though they dated back to the 1960s. I took the stairs up to the third floor and walked down the narrow corridor which housed classrooms on either side. Heavy doors with small crosshatched windows were decorated with plaques bearing the names of members of staff. My destination was a classroom which continued the uninspiring 1960s theme presented throughout the rest of the building. I sat on the 2nd of two rows of chairs which had a gap in the middle, up against a brick-exposed wall that had been whitewashed. Various student-made posters about sports leadership adorned the walls, which broke up the monotonous white paint. There was a small window on the far wall which seemed to have been designed to ration the amount of light permitted into the room, with the rest provided by six thin strip lights audibly droning overhead.

As the students began to file in for the start of the course, somewhat frogmarched by the tutors, I received numerous glances full of caution and suspicion, as if I was a misplaced prop from a now-defunct scene. Once everyone was seated, Stanley, one of the tutors, began by explaining to the students that this week will be their sports leadership course. I was then briefly introduced to the students, which consisted of the bare minimum of information; that I was a PhD student studying the sports leadership course, and that I would be sat in amongst them during the training and taking notes. Although Stanley mentioned that I may want to have a chat with some of the students, he did not note anything about the interviews I wished to undertake after the course, despite discussing with him in our meeting two weeks prior that it might help if he could highlight this possibility to them. While I thought about this and made the first of many reconfigurations to my plans, Stanley had already moved onto discussing with the students what they could expect during their week of sports leadership training.

Course attendees and interviewees

The sports leadership course was run full time over five days of a term time week at the college, during which time I was able to slowly but surely get to know some of the course attendees. Overall, there were nineteen students who made up this cohort who were all enrolled in their first year on a full time Uniformed Public Services (UPS) course at the college. Perhaps due to the more formal setting of the course and the course attendees' relatively young ages, it took a while for me to build up rapport with them. It also did not help that there were no icebreaker activities, as the cohort already knew each other from their UPS course. However, I was able to begin conversations with some individuals during their sessions by asking what it was they were doing, and offering my assistance in fairly neutral tasks such as spelling words or repeating what the tutor had said earlier. After the course had finished, four of the students agreed to be interviewed for my research – Phoebe, Carl, Sally, and Maurice.

Phoebe (Female, 16⁹, White British) was studying the UPS course at the college as she wanted to work in the prison service, an ambition that was unwavering throughout our interviews. She initially did not see the point of doing the sports leadership course as “it were a bit boring at first, like some of the lessons didn’t really seem to fit in with the UPS course, like the fact that it’s a UPS course, why you do sports leaders, it’s a different thing really. So I didn’t really enjoy them”. However, she eventually recognised some benefits which stemmed from her experience. These namely related to how she communicated with people she did not know and projecting her voice when talking to groups, “it’s surprising how much you actually come out of yourself, even with it just being with your peers with people

⁹ All ages mentioned relate to the individual’s age at the first interview.

that you actually know [...] so it does help even though it is sport, different parts of it does help you in your life really, so yeah". Although she did not particularly enjoy sport (apart from horse riding), Phoebe described herself as having enjoyed the course overall, despite there being aspects which she thought did not relate to her own aspirations or contributed to the final assessment, "there were certain aspects that were alright but some of them were a bit pointless!". I noted during the delivery of the course that Phoebe was fairly quiet, and seemed to stay within her contained social group when it came to communicating. So it was somewhat of a surprise to me when she volunteered to participate with my research, as we had only exchanged a few pleasantries during the week. As such, our interviews began fairly slowly and involved numerous prompts and encouragement from myself as Phoebe guarded herself with short answers, which may have been due to her young age. As time passed in each interview though she would begin to express more comfort in elaborating on her answers, and by the end of our time I felt as though she was cautiously welcoming of me as a researcher.

Carl (Male, 20, White British) had spent a couple of years after school trying different courses and jobs before starting on the UPS course at the college. From school he started a motor vehicle repair course, before switching onto a painting and decorating course, and also worked in retail and as a glass collector in a nightclub. He decided he wanted to go into a service, which initially was the marines before he understood the physical requirements for entry, and so he aimed for the fire service instead as he "just want(s) to help like the public. I was a bit naughty when I was growing up so like I've grown up a lot now so I just want to give something back to the, to the community and just help others". Carl enjoyed the sports leadership course and took quite a bit from it, particularly in terms of communicating with and organising groups of people as "it helped with how to speak to somebody, praise

them when they're doing good, erm tell them if they're obviously cocking around messing about. It has, it has its benefits yeah". However, the voluntary hours organised by his tutors soured his experience slightly as "it wasn't properly thought about, like it wasn't run through enough. Like everyone said it was going to be simple but it wasn't as simple as everybody said. [...] For the actual people who run the organisation to call us stupid cunts, I don't think is on at all". Despite this he still considered the course to have opened more career "pathways" for him, and saw coaching as a viable alternative if he did not pursue entry into the fire service "it was quite eye-opening, so like I said before you've got a fall back. Not everyone's going to go onto the military service so at least I've got something to fall back on, so it was quite good". Carl was, in his own words, "a bit of a jack the lad", and so often engaged in conversations with me during the week. Initially it felt as though this was just to make his friends laugh, as he would often speak loudly to me to gain the attention of others. As the week wore on he would talk to me on a more individual basis, and was one of the first to volunteer for my interviews. Our interviews were easy to maintain and flowed fairly easily, leading me to believe that Carl was accepting of me as a researcher.

Sally (Female, 16, White British) was at college with the intention of going into the police initially, although this had changed by the final interview to the military police, as she was able to enter that process sooner - "I'm just getting fed up of around here, like I just want to get out as soon as possible". She was very reluctant to engage with the sports leadership course as she struggled to see what benefit a sports-orientated course would have for her future career "I didn't have a clue what it was before I started, and it hasn't really helped with that (her career) as I can't really do anything with it". She criticised the way the materials were taught as well, explaining that "I prefer it being in front of me so that I can see what's happening,

and then I'll be able to do it then because someone's shown me how to do it, instead of doing a stickman and trying to figure out what it looks like, because I didn't have a clue". Despite not enjoying several aspects of the course and failing to see how the course connected with her college course, Sally still seemed to feel as though she gained some confidence in leading groups and communicating with others as a result of the process "Yeah I think it's been alright. Obviously it's not what I want to go into, but it's given us more like skills and knowledge of other things, like I think I'd be able to talk in front of a group now, but it's still quite scary thinking about it". I found Sally's openness and honesty quite shocking at times, as throughout the course she was not afraid to say what was on her mind. After the second day of the course when she asked me how to spell a word and I was able to assist, she displayed a sense of amenability to me asking her casual questions during the week, such as how she found certain sessions. In our interviews she replied to questions mostly in short sharp bursts which contained some fairly strong language, which I felt was more due to her displeasure at the course rather than any antipathy towards me.

Maurice (PFEC, Male, 18, White British) was on the UPS course at the college because he wanted to join the army, which by the time of the second interview he had passed his interview for and been accepted into. He was fairly sceptical about the sports leadership course to begin with, especially as "I didn't like the fact of us coming in every day, every morning at 9 o'clock, and like the first day was very boring because obviously you're just finding out what you're going to be doing". A particular gripe of his seemed to be that the course was only level 2 which "doesn't really let us do anything, does it?". He also poured his ire on the taught aspects of the course which did not appear in the assessment, and questioned the purpose of their occurrence if they did not contribute to him achieving his qualification, "some

of the stuff that we did in the week like, I thought that shouldn't be there that. We didn't even end up using that, do you know what I mean?". He did see some positives from the course though, such as some knowledge of the muscles and stretches, and after an enjoyable voluntary experience (which was different to that of the other interviewees) he viewed the possibility of coaching as a back-up career "if worse comes to worse, it would be a fun job, I mean it would be a good job to be able to do. I've been thinking that but like I've already signed up for the army now". Maurice appeared to be fairly sceptical of my attendance during the week, and seemed reluctant to talk to me or even acknowledge my presence in the first few days. However, once he saw me interacting with some of the other cohort and helping with things like spelling, he started to ask me some questions on day 4 when planning for his assessment. This appeared to break the ice between us somewhat, and our conversations during the interviews flowed at a steady rate with minimal cajoling being required.

Overall, it felt as though the initial disconnection with the sports leadership course may have arisen from the interviewees having already formed strong ideas regarding their future career identities, hence why they were participating with a UPS course which caters for specific careers. The sports leadership course was mostly viewed as a distraction, unnecessary addition, or even a threat to their current career identity. The youth transition literature identifies the age range of the interviewees as being susceptible to identity instability, which can lead to periods of confusion and 'yo-yo' transitions between youth and adulthood (Bloomer 2001; Walther 2006). By being forced to undertake the sports leadership course by their academic tutors, the course seemed to be viewed as something to be tolerated and overcome in order to continue with the UPS course. As such, only the information

that helped them pass their assessment appeared to be deemed worthy of recognition.

Tutors

Due to the sports leadership course taking place during a term-time week at the college, a total of seven tutors were used at various points during the week. Of these seven tutors I interviewed the two most frequent deliverers, as four of the tutors contributed to just a single session each. Stanley described this as being a purposive decision:

What we do is we try to specialise it, so we give the kids a variety of learning, a variety of teaching, and also as well we put specialist people in there, so for example you know I'm probably the best person to talk about disabled sports, being a disabled sportsperson and being in a wheelchair. Then we have like people who have got sports development degrees, sports science degrees who deliver them aspects of the course, and it does give different levels of variety, shows different methods of delivery.

Stanley (Male, 39, White British) was appointed head of the sport department in the college just before the sports leadership course started, but also delivered on several UPS modules. On the sports leadership course he delivered the introductory session and the adaptive sport session, which he was keen to do as he was a disabled sportsperson himself. He had been in a wheelchair for over 15 years after suffering a spinal injury while serving in the army. It was Stanley whom I first contacted about coming to the college to observe their sports leadership course, and I found him to be very supportive and welcoming of my presence. He was an ardent believer in the good sports leadership courses could do for students, and stated that "it's really rewarding to watch the learner journey really, you know and see the climb in confidence and enthusiasm and actual knowledge". As such, he was keen that I gained as much data as possible, and was very interested in hearing

about my findings at the earliest opportunity. While it was encouraging to know that at least one person was interested in my research, I did feel a slight unease in his unwavering faith of the effect the courses would have on participants, which cast him somewhat in the light of a “sports evangelist” (Giulianotti, 2004). In these moments I tried to put this thought to the back of my mind, and during our conversations I reminded him I was doing this research in order to cast a critical eye on the courses.

Gail (Female, 42, White British) was the other lead tutor who helped to organise the sports leadership course from an administrative point of view. Gail was a tutor at the college who specialised in fitness, as she had a background in personal training and fitness coaching. She delivered on around half of the sports leadership sessions, and placed a lot of emphasis on what was required for the assessment, as she felt it would retain the focus of the participants during the delivery. Gail was also keen on implementing further Sports Leaders UK qualifications into other college courses, such as the maths and English leadership awards. Similar to Stanley, Gail was also a strong supporter of using the sports leadership course for the purposes of the UPS course, and considered it be an extension of the UPS course itself:

The scheme of work is written the same as it would be for a UPS programme, the lesson plans are all written, they're all in a file, resources are all produced, we don't always use Sports Leaders' resources, we use a lot of our own resources, but again that's because we've got a lot of those resources because a lot of it might cross over with the UPS. Whereas if we purely used Sports Leaders' resources we might not tick some boxes with the UPS, and sometimes we're trying to match the two up.

Gail appeared to be tolerant of me, rather than being proactively hospitable of me like Stanley was, but nonetheless she did not verbalise any resistance to my presence during the courses.

Of particular interest to me during this course was the relationships between the tutors and the course attendees. I felt a power balance existed which conformed to an archetypal teacher-student relationship, which involved a dominant teacher and subservient student (Sfard, 1998). One incident which was indicative of this occurred when Stanley and Reece, who was also a tutor and present during a number of the sessions but rarely said much, assumed the persona of an army drill sergeant at the start of the session. Orders were barked out to students who had arrived late to take a seat, and everyone was directed to stand up when another member of staff entered the room. The latter event happened several times during the first half an hour of this particular session, and standing at their arrival became a Pavlovian response by the students, so much so that I found myself beginning to stand to attention on a couple of occasions. As the PowerPoint slides began to come to an end the students' yawns were stifled as the word 'assessment' appeared in large lettering across the screen. "There will be an assessment on everything that you've learnt throughout the week on Friday, so you need to make sure that you pay attention to everything we do" explained Stanley. Most of the students shifted uncomfortably in their seats, as one person pleaded "do we have to do the assessment Staff? What if we don't pass it or can't do it?" Stanley replied dogmatically "of course you have to do the assessment, you don't get a qualification for free!"

Indeed, a disciplinarian approach was employed demonstrating the tutors' pedagogy throughout the delivery of the sports leadership course. As the UPS course was designed to prepare students for a career in service based roles, such as the armed forces, the police force, and the prison service, a disciplinarian approach was commonly used during their regular course too. The course

attendees' addressing of the tutors as "Staff" and standing to attention upon the arrival of other "Staff" struck me as being incongruous with a sports leadership course which is supposed to promote individual agency – I was confused as to how such subservient behaviour could stimulate leadership. However, I reconciled myself with the thought that the continuation of this pedagogy on the sports leadership course further demonstrated the amalgamation of the sports leadership course into the UPS course. It seemed to me that the tutors maintained their current pedagogic practices and continued the power balance established prior to the sports leadership course, with minimal examples of empowering students being apparent during the delivery of the course. However, I noticed that despite the apparent disconnection between the participants and the sports leadership course, there were signs of the synergy between the two courses being achieved, as the interviewees expressed an awareness of how the sports leadership course may be applied outside of the UPS course. Their initial resistance seemed to demonstrate the importance of course attendees being able to understand how their sports leadership course experiences fit in with their current practices, particularly when it forms part of a larger course.

Overall, I found this experience rather disconcerting. In particular, the formal educational setting and disciplinarian approach was uncomfortable for me. I realised that I had expected much more alternative and inclusive pedagogic practices in the delivery of the materials, as this was what was promoted on the Sports Leaders UK website. What I experienced seemed to contrast with this image, which led me to question whether all the sports leadership courses were delivered in the same way. Keen to find out whether this was the case, I began the next course with a sense of apprehension.

5.2.2 Morningside Community Centre

Arriving at Morningside Community Centre

The second sports leadership course I attended differed in several ways to Pencey FE College, mainly because it was orientated towards a community context as opposed to an educational environment. Morningside Community Centre was the name of the leisure centre where the course was run, which took place amongst the backdrop of everyday communal use of a gym, swimming pool, and sports hall. The course was organised and delivered by a charitable trust funded by the local council. The trust was responsible for all of the major sports and leisure facilities in the Hillside borough. The charitable trust offered the course free of charge to eligible participants, who had to be unemployed and over the age of 16, as part of a wider programme that also offered either a free lifeguarding or gym instructors' level 1 qualification after successful completion of the sports leadership course. It was the only course in my research delivered on a part time basis, with the taught aspect taking place for four hours per day on a Thursday and Friday morning, every week for six weeks.

The leisure centre itself had been renovated less than twelve months before the sports leadership course began, and as such it exuded a feeling of regeneration. The building had clean light grey walls and floors, which were contrasted by four large red sofas. The walls were decorated with various plaques providing a brief description of the history of Morningside, the sporting events which had taken place there, and the significance of the public baths that the building originally housed. The dominant feature of the foyer was the four large doors opposite the entrance which led to the sports halls, surrounded by promotional material for sports and events, which encouraged people to book a badminton court or to take part in the

local netball league. Eventually a woman wearing a t-shirt bearing the name of Catherine approached me, who herded me around the corner to a café area to conduct our meeting. Catherine explained that the building was built to replace the outdated swimming baths that hadn't changed much from Victorian times. It was now the centre for all sorts of community projects and had links with the local council and job centre.

After Catherine had briefed me on the schematics and background of the course organisation she politely excused herself to do some last minute preparations in conjunction with the other tutor running the course. I sauntered back to one of the red sofas to wait for the start of the session, feeling reassured that I would be welcomed by both the tutors and by the course attendees. My conversation with Catherine had been extremely friendly and full of warmth, which I thought may have been due to our similar ages – one detour in our talk concerned our undergraduate University experiences, which had overlapped temporally and took place in nearby locations. After sitting back on the sofa for a few minutes a middle-aged gentleman in a tracksuit entered the building and sat down opposite myself, before asking “are you here for the course too?”. After confirming I was, he introduced himself as Mo before engaging with an unprompted regaling of the reasons why he was there. Once Mo had finished his account of life in Morningside to me, he turned to a woman who had also recently arrived and again introduced himself. “Have I seen you before from somewhere?” he asked her, before adding “I know where I’ve seen you, you sign on at the job centre on a Tuesday don’t you? I’ve seen you hanging around there!” A look of recognition swept across her face as she replied, “yeah that’s right, I thought I recognised you too when I first came in here but I couldn’t place where from. I’m Sharon. You here for the sports leaders course too?” I took a back seat as they dropped into friendly small talk. Mo continued, “Yeah I want to get a job as a

fitness instructor, so this is ideal for me really. How about you, do you want to work in sport like?" Sharon replied, "I guess so, I'm not fussy really. This is just something to do isn't it? It beats just sitting at home doing nothing!"

Once the rest of the cohort had filtered into the foyer Catherine ushered everybody into the sports hall, where the other tutor, James, was waiting. He welcomed everyone onto the course and, after outlining how the course would be delivered and the health and safety protocols, he introduced me as a researcher from the Open University. He stressed that I was there not to assess them but to investigate the course itself, which led to several people turning to look at me and proffer smiles in my direction. As his introduction wore on, James appeared to be making a conscious attempt to distance himself from the role of a teacher, and stressed that it was really up to the individuals as to how much they would get out of the course, with sentences like "I'll show you how you might run certain activities, but at the end of the day it's up to you how you do it. You might think I've not done it quite right, or that I should've done something differently. That's ok, as long as you can justify why you're doing something, you can do anything you want however you want". The language and activities used by both of the tutors seemed to focus on empowering the individuals and encouraging them to assume responsibility for their own choices. This began with the ice breaker activity, which involved organising ourselves into different arrangements, such as by name, age, and height. I felt as though participating in these activities was a good idea, as I was able to get to know a lot of the cohort during these games, and they were able to get to know me too. I felt accepted by the course attendees, and had to withdraw myself from engaging with the first session of the course delivery, amid fervent protestations from the course attendees.

Course attendees and interviewees

On the first day there were twenty-seven participants who started the course, although this number diminished greatly as the sports leadership course continued, with eighteen participants seeing the course through to completion. There were a range of ages, experiences, and ethnicities that made up the course cohort. They all had the common denominator of being unemployed, which seemed to bring about a mutual recognition and understanding between the course attendees. However, there was a large variance in how each individual interpreted this circumstance, and how much they appeared to want to change it, meaning motivations and expectations of the sports leadership course seemed to differ between individuals. Of the eighteen participants, five volunteered to participate with my research and the cyclical interview process. I had actually thought and hoped more might wish to participate, as I felt as though I had built up a strong relationship with most of the cohort over the course of the six-week programme. Leading on from the initial ice breakers, I engaged in friendly conversations with different individuals and groups during the breaks and rest periods, and had participated in two of the activities when the numbers were short. As it was, the five individuals whom I interviewed were Jordan, Nick, Myrtle, Tahir, and Daisy.

Jordan (Female, 24, Pakistani British) had an eclectic mix of job experiences, both before and during the research. Having done internships with the council and NVQs in business administration and customer service over the 2 years prior to the course, Jordan decided to work towards her aim of being a gym instructor by starting with the sports leadership course. She then participated with a gym instructors course, as she had “always been buying gym equipment at home and using that. I would like to eventually get a job in the sports industry, because it makes you feel good as well doesn’t it, helping other people”. Soon after she finished the sports leadership

course Jordan gained a part time job as a trampolining coach, which included working with children with additional needs. By the final interview, Jordan had moved into full time employment, working as a PA for a young girl with autism. She still harboured hopes of working in a gym in the future, but had doubts about her parents' acceptance of her working in such a role, "ideally I would like to work in a gym, but I don't know if that's going to happen or not (laughs). I don't know if erm my family would allow it or, I don't know. They probably would do but it's the thing of getting the job as well isn't it?". Jordan expressed her enjoyment of the sports leadership course as it helped her overcome her shyness and improved her communication skills, particularly with children, as before she "weren't, like, too confident with kids, but I am much more confident with them now. And it's made me more like confident as a person as well". Jordan was one of the more difficult individuals to interview and took quite a bit of encouragement to expand on her answers. I think this was mainly due to her feeling pressured by the interview situation, as we had spoken freely during informal conversations. However, once we had sat down in the café and I began recording the interview, Jordan appeared to be reticent to talk about her experiences. This was perhaps a situation I could have attempted to adjust to make her feel more relaxed, such as by not audio recording it; a lesson which I shall heed in the future.

Nick (Male, 22, Black British) started the sports leadership course unemployed, having previously engaged with (but failing to finish) college BTEC courses in sport, bricklaying and shop instillation. He did not have a specific career in mind and preferred to wait and see what opportunities might arise. He said, "I'm an open person so I like to learn new skills, you never know what might come up, so it's good to learn new things". Despite this, he mentioned a preference to work as a gym instructor, personal trainer, or athletics coach (he trained part time with a local

athletics club). At the final interview Nick had applied for an apprenticeship working in a warehouse, which he had an interview for but did not feel optimistic about gaining as “it’s kind of hard everywhere to be honest, everyone’s complaining, I thought I was the only one! You can have 10 interviews and see nothing coming so it’s hard, I don’t think they give you a chance”. He didn’t find the content of the sports leadership course particularly challenging, although he “thought it would be like maybe hard, maybe like school-wise, not school but similar. But then I found out it was basically relaxing, [...] I think anyone can pass this to be honest, it’s not hard”. Nick was “glad” to do the sports leadership course “because I did learn something else, now I know how to work with, to play about, to work with children, disabled children”. Nick was very affable towards me and made me feel included within the sports leadership course cohort very quickly, mainly as we were able to discuss football and athletics news together. My interviews with him were some of the longest ones conducted, as he seemed happy to discuss his experiences from the course and his life in detail.

Myrtle (Female, 33, White British) had spent the previous 10-15 years being in and out of casual work, starting qualifications and not completing them, and raising a young family despite difficulties with previous relationships. Myrtle “was a bit nervous about” the course at first “because I didn’t know, who you’re working with, what you were going to get up against, what the people were going to be like”. She seemed to grow more comfortable with the course environment as it went on and “gained more confidence from it through getting to know other people, and knowing what other people are like”. She continued to volunteer throughout the interview period on a number of different programmes, and was placed on the casual coaching list for the disabled sport sessions which were run locally. Myrtle cited the sports leadership course (and the tutor Catherine) as changing her from a stay-at-

home mum with little to look forward to during the days, into a willing volunteer with a desire to work in sport throughout the local area and continue gaining qualifications “if it wasn’t for Catherine and the course, I’d probably still be at home in my pyjamas. [...] It were more than just a qualification, it’s a brand new kind of life”. Myrtle was friendly towards me from the first day, and seemed to be inquisitive about my research as a whole, asking me questions about how long it would take, how many words I had to write, and so on. She seemed to enjoy the interviews and treated them as a space where she was able to reflect on her sense of personal progression. She continuously projected a feeling of trust and openness during our conversations.

Tahir (Male, 31, Pakistani British) was employed as a youth worker for four years before being made redundant around two years before the start of the sports leadership course. Since then he had struggled to find employment, and participated in the sports leadership course, “because I’ve done similar kind of work before. I’m obviously not working at the moment so I might as well do it, it’s a qualification to have so I might as well do it”. Because of his previous experiences he found the course did not teach him “anything new”, but he viewed the course as “refreshing, trying to get my practice back a little bit. So yeah it’s good, I enjoyed it”. However, he did not feel that the course had helped him with his job search, and in our interviews he described his struggles in finding any kind of job within the current economic climate, although he was still “glad I did it, and er no regrets, but it’s not helped me at all, not in the sports sector no”. Tahir was fairly quiet towards me during the course, and tended to stay within his established social group which I think had been formed prior to the course. I did not feel this was because of any particular reason, and when I asked him or others from his social group a question they would happily reply; however, they would not initiate a conversation with me.

During the interviews though Tahir appeared happy to talk about his experiences, and shared his personal strife about his struggles in gaining employment.

Daisy (Female, 24, White British) was a recent graduate in sports rehabilitation. After she completed her degree she gained employment as a sports massage therapist, but was made redundant around eighteen months before the start of the sports leadership course. Since then she had worked several part time jobs, including at the local college, and had volunteered in a number of roles which involved sport. She was keeping her options open regarding her career, but was aiming for something around her old job as “I miss physio sports rehab, I do. But I am thinking about a bit of coaching here and there. Being a P.E. teacher is a back-up plan too”. When reflecting on the course she referred to her confidence a number of times, particularly in terms of needing to “increase” or “boost” it in order to increase her chances of gaining future employment, as she thought that to “present to a full group, because I always thought if I wanted to be like a teacher or a teaching assistant, you need the confidence to be able to stand and present in front of people so, that’s what my aim was”. She believed that participating in the sports leadership course had helped her confidence, and she had gained two temporary coaching positions following the course to supplement her ongoing part-time role at the local college where she “always finds it (the course) useful and I always talk about it, I think I wouldn’t have been here today if I weren’t, I always think that. I don’t think I’d have been here with confidence and you know motivation”. Daisy seemed amenable to my presence on the course and was always friendly towards me, although we did not engage in too many social conversations during the delivery of the course. She seemed to understand my presence there and referred to my research as my dissertation, which could indicate she was equating my experience with her own University experiences. Our conversations during the interviews would flow at a

natural pace, and Daisy required minimal prompts from me when discussing the course.

With all the course attendees being unemployed, the main motivation of running the course within this particular area of Greater Manchester seemed to reflect the social deprivation of the Hillside borough, as was identified in section 5.1.1. Thus, the aim of many of the course attendees seemed to be to gain a qualification that would help them gain employment, attain further qualifications, and/or return to education. These reasons would seem to echo the existing sport-for-development literature which argues that addressing the wider societal implications of communities should be a primary concern for such courses (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). The course attendees seemed to value the input of the tutors, both in terms of the course delivery and the focus on their own personal development. With many of the participants appearing to be disaffected by the world of employment, as most of them had been made unemployed against their will, the chance to discuss their options with someone else seemed to be a welcome one. More importantly, they appeared to gain a sense of control over their own future, with most of the course attendees seeing the sports leadership course as a gateway to greater things.

Tutors

The two tutors were both present for the duration of the sports leadership course, although they each appeared to have clearly defined and different roles. This was something that both James and Catherine expanded upon during my interviews with them. James and Catherine were also the tutors for the subsequent Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre course, which I was invited to attend as a result of getting on well with both of them while on the Morningside Community Centre course. It

was also through Catherine that I was able to arrange a meeting with Phillip, the tutor of the Sternwood Training Ground course. The relationship I cultivated with the tutors on the Morningside Community Centre course proved to be invaluable for my research project.

Catherine (Female, 27, Black British) was a volunteer development officer in the local charitable trust, which was responsible for organising events in the area. Her main duties were to recruit, retain, and train volunteers, and so her role on the sports leadership courses was more orientated towards organisation and pastoral support for individuals, rather than delivering the content. As she put it, “I like it more because you get to build up a relationship, because I, whereas you spoke to James who does a lot of tutoring, I’d say in a lot of ways I’m more of a mentor, so speaking and talking and getting to know them, and like knowing all the additional issues”. She viewed building this personal relationship up as crucial, as “I think that’s what keeps the volunteers, that relationship, rather than if it was just we meet as one group, we do as one group, then we can, no-one really feels special then I think”. For the Morningside Community Centre course she interviewed each participant, “so like we do the interviews at the beginning, we do the catch up in the middle, and the interviews at the end, so it’s very individual, I would say, depending on that person and what they’re wanting out of it”. By the time of my final round of interviews with the course participants Catherine had gained a new job at the local college, as her contract at the trust was only fixed-term. As noted in the start of this section, Catherine was extremely friendly and welcoming, and would frequently go out of her way to check that I had everything I needed. When James delivered his sessions she would often sit next to me while I wrote my observation notes and offer some friendly conversation. She was also respectful of my role as an ethnographer, and tried to provide as much information to any questions I asked.

James (Male, 34, White British) worked part time for the same charitable trust as Catherine, and also worked as a football coach at the local college and at a local professional football club. He delivered most of the content on both the Morningside Community Centre and the Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre sports leadership courses, and found both cohorts to be receptive of his methods. Despite the large cohort on this course, “I thought it went really well, I think they had, we had a bit of a drop off but we had a really large numbers at the start of it, so I think we did really well. You see them meet as a group now and they’ve got that support base which I think is really good. So all in all I think it was really, a real good course, and yeah happy with the end result”. James held the sports leadership course in high regard as he credited it with being the starting point for his own career, as “my sports leaders course was the first course I did when I was 16, erm, probably one of the biggest things, erm the tutor who delivered that course to me erm was kind of a big role, big role model, I wanted to be where he was at the time”. As James did most of the course delivery I did not interact with him as much as Catherine, but when I did he always came across as kind and sociable to me. He did not indicate me being there was troublesome in any way, and would reply to any of my questions in a large amount of detail.

While both the tutors recognised that each course attendee was there for different reasons, the set up and delivery of the sports leadership course was aimed towards helping the participants gain employment. Throughout each session both of the tutors constantly related what they were doing to job related scenarios, such as interview situations, curriculum vitae additions, and interacting with other people at various levels. However, the tutors were keen to stress that the sports leadership course was not the complete solution to their unemployment, as noted by James:

The purpose is to try and get them into work or into college or whatever it is, back into education. Erm, I do think it's only one small part of it the sports leader. Although I do think it is the ideal course to link in, but it's not the be all and end all, and it's kind of what I say at the start of the project, that it's down to them and the other stuff that they do that's going to actually get what they're aiming for, to get them a job.

Not only did this reflect on the purpose of the course from the tutors' perspectives, but it also signified the motivations of the charitable trust which funded the course (which itself is funded by the local council). Rather than the sports leadership course being just about personal development for the individuals who participated, it was also a tool for course organisers to address the unemployment levels in the Hillside borough, which I highlighted in section 5.1.1. This use of the sports leadership course resonated with one of the key themes presented on the Sports Leaders UK website (see appendix A), which portrayed the 'sociably desirable individual' as one who contributed to society either through employment, volunteering, or education. The tutors were able to orientate their pedagogies directly towards the requirements of the local area, as identified by those who organised and funded the course.

After the shock of the disciplinarian nature of the Pencey FE College sports leadership course, my experiences at Morningside Community Centre reassured me that the path I was taking with my research was not only the correct one, but also a necessary one. The course attendees' experiences appeared to have been directly influenced by the aim of the course. The purpose for the course existing in this location was determined by the societal context of the area, as the course funders attempted to decrease the high unemployment rates and levels of deprivation in Hillside. This seemed to result in the course being delivered with a specific motive in mind; to assist the participants in being able to contribute positively towards society. I was taken aback slightly not only by the vast contrast in how this

course had been delivered compared to the Pencey FE College course, but also the variety of individual stories which transpired while on the Morningside Community Centre course. It was heart-warming to hear how some people planned on using the course as a platform towards greater things in their lives, but equally discouraging to hear how certain people seemingly used the course to simply kill the spare time they had due to being unemployed. The rich tapestry of each person's life, and how they intertwined with each other, encouraged me to push my research forward onto the next course.

5.2.3 Sternwood Training Ground

Arriving at Sternwood Training Ground

The third sports leadership course was again unique in terms of its contextual grounding, as it was the fifth week of a twelve-week Prince's Trust programme for unemployed and deprived 16-25 year olds around the Municipa borough. The location of the course was also significant due to its physical properties and its affiliation. It was the former training ground of a local Premier League football club from less than a decade ago, and was used at the time of the course for the club's youth team and reserves' games, as well as some of the club's community projects. As I approached the site on the morning of the first day I saw the large surrounding walls which shielded the inner workings from the public eye, and I started to wonder what was in store for me, both in terms of the course and the facilities on offer. As I strolled through the entrance gates I was met by a scene of disuse and dereliction. I hesitated as I opened the door to the building the course was starting in, as I saw bricks, pieces of wood, and building equipment strewn across the floor, causing me to wonder if I had gone to the wrong building and that this one was due to be torn down instead. I entered the desolate foyer and made my way upstairs past haphazardly placed pictures of the football club's former halcyon days. While I

waited for the tutor to arrive I took in the decoration of the room being used, which was a continuation of the 'minimalist/abandonment' theme I had witnessed so far. It was a large room with few fixtures in it, with the rest of the ample space in the room only being taken up by more random bits of building materials. "You can tell that the club hasn't been here for a while can't you?" said Phillip, the tutor, as he joined me at the table. The club still had a large presence at the setting, and even provided part of the funding for the Prince's Trust course through one of their community projects, although the aesthetic commentary of the setting perhaps displayed their sense of obligation rather than celebration of the cause (Woodward, 2007).

After 5 minutes or so of polite conversation with Phillip we heard a bus pull up outside, which signified the arrival of the course attendees. They eventually burst through the door of the room we were in a hive of chitchat, which continued for several minutes after they settled into their seats. Phillip remained standing at the front, arms folded with a smile on his face, seemingly waiting for them to settle down of their own accord. Once the chatter had reduced to a soft murmur, Phillip began his introduction to the course, and quickly drew attention to my presence there as a researcher. He assured them that I was not there to assess them at all and tried to paint me in a neutral, friendly light, which was going well until he told the cohort that I supported the arch rivals of the football team who owned the facilities we were using. After Phillip let this slip, I felt several pairs of eyes staring at me and heard a couple of incredulous laughs. There was one person who was not laughing though. Harry stared at me with a ferocious intensity that forced me to physically squirm in my seat. "You shouldn't be allowed here" he stated matter-of-factly, half through a forced smile and half through genuinely gritted teeth. "The likes of you shouldn't be allowed in here. It's not right". Despite this rather awkward introduction, my reception from the cohort felt welcoming enough, albeit tinted slightly by an atmosphere of

aloofness. I had more confidence in myself as an ethnographer at this stage, and tried not to over-worry about any potential obstacles which might have come my way. I instead focused on taking my notes, and reassured myself that I would be able to chat with the course attendees at various points during the week.

The spatiality of this sports leadership course had struck me in two main ways as being odd. One was the ubiquitous sense of decay and neglect amongst the aesthetics of the course setting, particularly within what was used as the formal classroom, which might easily have been interpreted by the course attendees as correlating with their apparent position within society. They were using facilities deemed as being unimportant and unworthy of attention by the football club, while on a course which actively described itself as providing a 'second chance' for individuals who found themselves on the boundary of society (Prince's Trust, 2012). Additionally, the course attendees started the training in a classroom-style setting, despite few of the cohort having achieved any GCSE qualifications at school, which suggested they were not comfortable in such an environment. This became clear fairly quickly as both Phillip and me were called upon to transcribe for some individuals who struggled with their writing. Both of these factors made me think that the course organisers of the sports leadership course had not taken into account the setting they had provided for this particular cohort. However, this was not raised as a major issue by any of the course attendees. In fact, the affiliation of the football team to the location appeared to have more of a bearing on their experiences, with half of the cohort supporting the team in question and the other half seemingly detesting the thought of football altogether.

Course attendees

This course was delivered full time over one week. Eight people were registered to take part on the sports leadership course, although only seven people attended throughout the week, with the remaining individual unable to participate due to appearing in court for allegedly stealing a car. The course attendees were already familiar with each other from the previous four weeks of the Prince's Trust course, which had also been frequently attended and delivered by Phillip. As such, social bonds between individuals had already been formed and did not seem to change during the sports leadership course delivery. As noted in section 4.4.2, I was unable to gain interviews with any of the course attendees from this course due to their commitments for the rest of the Prince's Trust course and access restrictions due to their social vulnerability. Therefore, I was unable to gain much information about each course attendee.

In lieu of my reflections regarding any interviewees, I now consider the course attendees in a more general sense. As highlighted at the end of the last section, the impression of the setting and the football club seemed to influence the individuals' experiences strongly, in both positive and negative ways. One instance in particular appeared to sum this up, when Phillip had set up some equipment for some activities, which included some cones, bibs, and a ball. As soon as Arthur, Terry, Eddie and Harry saw the ball they each rushed towards it with a war cry of "mine!", before they started playing football with it in one of the free nets. "Are we going to get on with something then or what big Phil?" asked Carmen, as she joined Owen and Vivian in looking thoroughly bored and aloof by the prospect of more football. It seemed for four of the male participants that the journey to Sternwood Training Ground resembled a form of pilgrimage for them, leading to constant requests to play football and frequent cries such as Terry's, when he said "You've brought us to

Sternwood big Phil, you've got to let us play football!". For the rest of the cohort who did not identify with football, their wish to play was the polar opposite to that of the aforementioned four participants, leading to feelings of antipathy and disregard towards the inclusion of football within the sports leadership course. Although the tutor recognised that not everybody enjoyed football and tried to include other activities, he appeared to exacerbate the problem by offering football as a reward for completing tasks:

It's great to have access to the ground, so once they've done their log books, let's go up to Sternwood Training Ground and have a knock about, you know so it's things like that. Even those that don't play football, it's just a bit of fun just to get away.

While it is difficult for course organisers to consider all of the permutations when selecting a location, the Sports Leaders UK website suggested that sports leadership courses should cater for a wide range of sports, games, and activities, rather than just football, something which a tutor needs to take into account during the course delivery. As it was, the dominance of football during this week did not seem to deter the cohort from completing the course, as all seven of them were present at the end of the week. Phillip reported that following the twelve-week Prince's Trust programme five of the course attendees were participating in employment, further training courses or work experience, with the other two individuals dropping out due to issues with their log books:

You know little Carmen, I don't know why, she just didn't, she did all that right to the end and then didn't bother coming through because of her book, her log book. [...] The one person that I was really shocked with, er annoyed shocked er upset whatever, was Eddie. Yeah he was fine, he was doing really really well, and then it come after week 11 I think it was, didn't come in. [...] Terry got a job apparently, working at a school, just helping out and this and that, which is great. [...] Owen is going into more coaching doing his kayaking or canoeing, so he now wants to get more into that, which is

absolutely brilliant. [...] Vivian is er working at some place near where she lives, where they groom horses, she's into horses, loves horses, and they actually race horses as well, so she's there. [...] Arthur, he's lined up to go to Kenya to do sports coaching with this company, how fantastic is that, 3 months or whatever, gets paid but not a fantastic wage, what an experience that is on your C.V. Harry who was one of the hardest ones, he's now lined up for working with a football club doing his work experience there, absolutely loved it, saw the light if you like probably, now wants to get into coaching and wants to do his level 1.

Although the brashness of some of the course attendees' candour was rather intimidating at times, in particular some of the monologues directed towards Phillip, I felt as though the course attendees were receptive of me. It may have helped that I participated in quite a few of the practical activities in order to make the cohort an even eight rather than seven, and it seemed as though this helped to ease any potential tensions. It also seemed to me that the attitude of Phillip created a more relaxed atmosphere on the course, which helped to make the course attendees responsive and open.

Tutor

Phillip (Male, 59, White British) was a retired fireman who had always taken a keen interest in coaching, having done his first football coaching badge when he was 19. He delivered coaching and sports leadership sessions for a number of different organisations across the North West of England. He enjoyed the challenges associated with delivering to individuals with behavioural problems, although he admitted that he struggled during the course at Sternwood Training Ground.

This was the hardest one I've ever done. It might have been the numbers, I don't know. I couldn't put my finger on it. I know their attention span was limited (laughs) but oh talk about tolerance. Jesus Christ, I was very close on a couple of occasions if not more to just finish it, you know I was that close.

Phillip was pleased he had persisted with it though, and the overall outcome of the course seemed to be worth it from him, as he “can see the benefits now. The results were good, it’s just the journey was, erm, very bumpy. Very, very bumpy”.

What struck me most about Phillip was his own flexible and interactive pedagogic style. One incident in particular struck a chord with me, which involved a game similar to quick cricket being set-up. Everything was given a pirate-themed name to make it more engaging for children. The names seemed to confuse a few of the group however, with Arthur having to ask Phillip three times what the ‘crew’ were again. “Well if they’re fielders then why don’t you just call them bloody fielders?” Phillip explained once more that the names made it more fun for younger children, before Arthur got visibly frustrated and shouted in Phillip’s face “why can’t you just give me a straight answer?” I sat there slightly shocked and taken aback, as it seemed as though he had gone too far with this outburst. But still Phillip just stood there smiling, before casually explaining once more that making fun names up for games like this was an easy way to get young kids to engage more. My sense of disbelief remained as to how Phillip was able to accept that kind of behaviour, while the game got underway without any further disruptions. Phillip explained his attitude towards delivering in our interview:

I think if you did lose your temper you’re not losing control, you’re actually, er you put too much pressure on yourself. If, if you take, it’s no skin off my nose, I don’t mean that disrespectfully, but what I mean is if you get stressed up with it, it can build up that can’t it? Erm, if you’re forever shouting at them to tell them off you have different reactions from different people. So if you’re chilled they can become chilled as well. [...] I’ve been slapped across the face by a young kid and you know it’d be easy for me to push him over or whatever, but there’s an issue there so it was a matter of chatting to him and seeing what was wrong, there was problems at home.

Phillip's approach to delivering the course content showed he understood the participants may have had behavioural and/or emotional problems, as well as issues with authority. He was able to adjust his delivery style to suit the demands of social context of the course and deliver a sports leadership experience the course attendees seemed able to understand and relate to. His laid-back style appeared to be effective with the course attendees, and made me feel more relaxed during the course. Our relationship was also helped by the fact that he gave me a lift most of my way home at the end of each day on the course, which enabled us to strike up more casual conversations too. This was reflected in the length of our interview, which lasted almost two hours when we were only scheduled for one hour.

What really jumped out at me while at Sternwood Training Ground was how different it was to the previous courses, with both the location and the way the course was delivered being so distinctive. The cohort's behaviours was fairly challenging, but the easy-going manner in which Phillip got them to focus on the course materials I found impressive. However, the constant requests to play football, as well as the casual conversations and references to football, really imposed on me just how much of an influence the location had on this course. It made me wonder whether football would have been discussed so much if the course had taken place at a venue less imbued by football (or even sport), and how this might have changed the course attendees' experiences of the sports leadership course, in particular for those who did not like football. I felt a lot more self-assured about my position as an ethnographer after this course, and was confident in my ability to adapt to the differing settings I had encountered as I moved onto my final course.

5.2.4 Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre

Arriving at Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre

The final sports leadership course was a community course which ran full time over one week. It took place in the Central Township of the Hillside borough, the same as the Morningside Community Centre course, and also had the same tutors who delivered that course in James and Catherine. However, the location of the course was different, and the buildings of Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre were only part way through their regeneration scheme at that time. As such, making my way to the entrance of the leisure centre turned out to be more complicated than I first imagined, as it was located within the grounds of a school that was being refurbished, with extensive building work being done in and around the area. The metal fences that restricted entry to non-hard hat and high visibility vest wearers surrounded the front of what was usually the entrance to the leisure centre, and instead diverted people on a winding path around the rear of the site. I entered into a reception area that looked as though it was last repainted in the 1980s. The bare brick walls exuded no warmth whatsoever, and the painted wood that bordered the small unattended reception cubical appeared to be mouldy and cracking, which created an uninspiring colour scheme of cream and decay. I entered the room where Catherine and James were waiting, which possessed an equally attractive décor to the reception area, and took a seat while the cohort began to arrive.

The morning passed by without much incident of note, with the sessions being almost identical to those from the first day of the Morningside Community Centre course. James introduced both the course and me to the course attendees, both of which were received with muted tolerance, before ice breaker activities commenced. Once again I joined in these, although I found the individuals on this course to be

less enthusiastic and willing to engage with the activities as those from the Morningside course. As lunch began, the silence between everyone in the room continued, as an atmosphere of nerves and tiredness developed. After a while the group that Misbah appeared to be the leader of began muffled conversations amongst themselves, with only the occasional word being audible to the outsiders. I decided instead to focus on not spilling any of my lunch on myself. However, each time I glanced towards the group across the room from me, I noticed Nasir and Imran looking at me and then laughing at each other, as I heard them exchange words such as “skinny jeans”, “Sheldon¹⁰”, and “researcher nerd” in mocking tones. I found myself in a strange position, as this was the first time that I had noticed any sort of outward antipathy towards my presence on the courses. I suddenly felt self-consciousness and unwelcomed, before Isabelle thankfully rescued me from a spiralling sense of doom and despair by asking what university I was from again.

There were noticeably fewer attempts at social networking amongst this group, between themselves, me, and the tutors, with the exception of one social group established prior to the course. As Misbah was a youth worker who ran a youth club for young Asian people within the Hillside borough, he had recommended the course to five of the other participants at Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre. This led to these six participants largely conversing only amongst themselves, which seemed to create a dominant social group that dissuaded the remaining participants from engaging with them. Most of the dialogue amongst the course cohort appeared to exist only within this social group, unless one of the group initiated a conversation with a participant from someone from outside the social group. Although I felt as

¹⁰ This was a reference to the character Sheldon Cooper from a popular television programme at the time, “The Big Bang Theory”. It has been noted numerous times by various individuals that I strike a passing resemblance to this character physically.

though this exclusion somewhat abated towards the end of the course and bore no ill will, it was still a noticeable feature of the course which influenced my own attempts to engage socially with the cohort.

Course attendees and interviewees

There were thirteen course attendees in total at the start of the course, although one participant was forced to withdraw after the first day when he tore his hamstring, meaning twelve participants completed the course. Catherine described it as a “general” course, meaning that it was not part of a wider sport-for-development or social programme, but instead was provided for individuals over 16 years old just so they could gain the qualification on its own. The participants were required to pay for the course if they were not in full time education, which only applied to two individuals. Following the somewhat ambivalent attitude I sensed from the cohort, both towards the course and myself, it was not much of a surprise when only two individuals volunteered to participate in my study and be interviewed, who were Isabelle and Misbah.

Isabelle (Female, 19, White British) worked nightshifts at a local warehouse, often working 60 hours a week, but had also done a lot of volunteering in the year before she started the sports leadership course. By the time of the second interview she had started a college access course in biology and health studies alongside her work, with the aim of starting a related University course the year after. Isabelle credited the sports leadership course with stimulating a renewed sense of confidence within herself, both physically and socially and felt “as though I’m back to my old confidence self but I’ve changed as a person, so yeah back to normal confidence”. During secondary school she suffered several knee and ankle problems, which resulted in her having to use crutches for a long period of time and

walking with a limp. The resulting attention and bullying this situation attracted caused Isabelle to withdraw socially as she “went proper, I went quiet, I didn’t talk to anyone, I stayed in myself”. However, after leaving school, gaining employment and successfully undergoing surgery on her knee and ankle, Isabelle felt abler when communicate with people she did not know and to try new experiences as “the course itself made me push myself out of my boundaries, I talk to people and stuff like that. It’s like even at work like I would’ve been too scared to ask the manager for anything. Now I just go in and, you know I’m much more upfront and have more confidence to ask for stuff”. Isabelle was quite inquisitive about my research, possibly as she had aspirations to go to university herself, and would frequently ask me questions about what notes I had taken. This led to the scenario which I reflected on in section 4.3.4 where she tried to look at my notes, but she eventually seemed to understand that I could not show her them, and we maintained a good relationship throughout the interviews.

Misbah (Male, 35, Pakistani British) had been employed as a youth worker for over 10 years. This appeared to mean that he perceived the sports leadership course as a chance to practice what he preached, as well as gain a recognised qualification which counted towards his continued professional development. He said, “yes I’m already delivering the sport sessions, I’m already a youth worker, however I needed that piece of paper that entitles me to go to any community organisation or anywhere to say look if you need something doing I’m qualified”. Indeed, “having that bit of paper” seemed important to him, but he also stated that he gained a lot of knowledge about new games and activities, as well as how to adapt sessions depending on equipment and the people involved. He continued, “I’d say the games that we learnt, some of them I can adapt to, some of the games I can do in my own practice”. Misbah also encouraged several members from one of his youth groups to attend

the sports leadership course, who he then subsequently asked to volunteer at a number of events he then ran as part of his job. He was keen to encourage others to participate and learn during the sports leadership course, and recognised the value it could have for each individuals' future career plans. He described them as "very lucky that they got an opportunity, you know, the main thing is that they progress so that the learning that they've identified and done, how have they used that in something else". Misbah had been eager to assist in my research and seemed pleased that he could contribute. I felt a bit unsure as to how receptive he was of me on a personal level, but his goodwill and willingness to be interviewed eased my worries, which led to our interviews being convivial and lasting over an hour apiece.

The overwhelming sentiment I gained from the course attendees was that they were there solely for the purpose of gaining the qualification and enhancing their Curriculum Vitae. This was emphasised when James asked the group who was looking for a career in sport and only five of the thirteen people put their hands up. Although the sports leadership course has a much wider remit than directing people specifically into careers in sport (see appendix A), it seemed to me as though this resulted in the participants focusing more on simply passing the assessment and attaining the qualification, rather than engaging more with the personal development aspects of the course. It felt as though this was reflected in the course attendees' attitude towards me – not an obstruction or a problem at all, but not something which might help them in gaining their qualification, and so not worth the effort to engage with.

Tutors

As previously mentioned, the tutors for this course were the same as those on the Morningside Community Centre course, James and Catherine. However, there were some noticeable differences between their delivery and thoughts of the two courses which are worthy of reflection. One is that James considered this course to be of a higher standard to that of Morningside Community Centre:

I think the level that they was at, I think the majority of them should be fine when delivering a session. I wouldn't say (they were) a really high level, there was a couple within the group that were, but as a group all in all I wouldn't say there was anyone who I was really too worried about. I thought from the start that the majority of them were going to pass and were going to be ok.

This seemed to reflect the motivation and purpose for the course being run. Rather than it being part of a wider personal or social development programme, this course was being run just for its own sake; so individuals could attain their sports leadership qualification. Additionally, I was surprised when I heard that Catherine perceived the course to be less sociable, and that this seemed to influence her practice quite substantially:

Yeah a little bit their attitude, just because I think, I know it sounds awful, but they were just a bit like "yeah whatev's, I'm here and I'm doing it because I'm doing it". Some of them were great, none of them were bad and horrible rude people, it were just, I suppose I pick up on it because I'm used to getting to know people. If I know they're not really interested, I know it sounds awful but I suppose I'm not really that interested, because if I know someone's dead keen and wants to help then I'm dead keen and want to help. I could see that they were just kind of there, going through the motions, it's like just a C.V. builder for them.

Catherine seemed to feel that the lack of social interactions on the course negatively influenced the experience for some, including herself. Although the lack of social

interactions on the course may have restricted the amount of social networking that took place, I did not believe it had much influence upon the delivery of the sports leadership materials or the course attendees' understandings of it. The group were still encouraged to work together throughout the course by the tutors, and it resulted in the entire cohort achieving their qualification. To this effect, it seemed as though the course attendees were satisfied with the course as they were able to get out of it what they wanted, which might not have necessarily aligned with what Catherine wanted them to gain from their participation.

Following the unique and rather unexpected experiences of the previous three courses, Hawthorne Ridge seemed as though it was more what Sports Leaders UK would want to depict as a 'normal' course, based on the tutors' interviews and what is portrayed on their website (see appendix A). The pragmatic attitude of the course attendees, in terms of mostly wanting the sports leadership qualification to expand their curriculum vitae, made the atmosphere on the course feel almost business like. The absence of social bonding made me reflect on my position as a researcher more, and at times I felt slightly more of an outsider than I had previously. Nevertheless, I was able to gather in-depth data for my study and experienced yet another sports leadership course.

5.3 Reflections from my experiences

I felt as though my ethnographic experience went well, mainly because of the various relationships I formed during that time, and the position I adopted as an ethnographer. The welcoming nature of the tutors at each course made me feel accepted, and in most cases this resulted in the tutors initially integrating me with the course attendees in a way which seemed to break down any potential barriers which might have existed. The one exception to this was the Pencey FE College

course, which may have been because of the more formal nature of the setting and the more disciplinarian tutor-student relationships which already existed. There was a lingering sense of distance throughout my interviews with the course attendees from that course, although I felt as though I was able to engage in more of an 'I-thou' encounter (Buber, 1958) with them through empathy, understanding, and a discrete amount of casual swearing. On the other courses my position as a 'moderate participant' (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2010) appeared to work well in engaging the course attendees on a social level, but also enabled me to reiterate I was an independent researcher and not from Sports Leaders UK. Although there were several occasions when I would be asked for answers or advice regarding the course, I would typically reply in a light-hearted manner that I did not know as I had not done the course myself. This would often result in a more casual conversation being struck up, which is why I also described my position as being 'socially active'. My approach of being "in the space between" an insider and outsider (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 60) seemed to work particularly well on the Morningside Community Centre course where I felt as though I developed a friendly bond with a number of the course attendees, which came across during some of my interviews when personal circumstances were on occasion discussed at length. This may have been helped by the temporal dimensions of this course, as it was delivered part-time over six weeks rather than full-time over one week, and so my engagement in the field was elongated.

Throughout my discussions of each sports leadership course there were many seemingly important influences which affected the tutors' delivery of the course, the course attendees' engagement with the materials, and my own perceptions of the course experience. These influences were wide-ranging, multi-faceted, and often specific to the location of each course. The extent of these differences came as a

surprise to me, as did the individuality of each sports leadership course experience. I encountered four unique derivatives of sports leadership courses composing of numerous interweaving and independent characteristics, which are too vast and messy to depict in their entirety within this thesis. I am, however, able to explore the aspects which struck me as being notable during my initial reflections while in the field of research. I now draw these reflections together.

5.3.1 Variations of course locations

One of the starkest differences between the courses was the materiality of the course settings and the effect it had on the course delivery. The sense of dilapidation generated by the buildings on the Pencey FE College and Sternwood Training Ground courses seemed to me to reflect upon the more intangible aspects of the course delivery, such as the mood of the course cohort and the atmosphere during certain moments. This feeling was exacerbated by the use of classrooms on both of these courses, despite being run for individuals disaffected by formal educational methods. The influence of the materiality upon the course also appeared to be evident when compared to the cleaner and newer buildings used on the Morningside Community Centre course, which created a sense of regeneration to the participants. Furthermore, the original use of the buildings felt as though they had a significant impact upon the course delivery. I noted this particularly during the Pencey FE College course, with the sports leadership course delivery style being maintained from the UPS course, and the Sternwood Training Ground course, where the inescapable influence of football became a dominant aspect of the course experience.

Overall, I was taken aback by how much influence the buildings had on each course delivery and the variations of delivery between each different location. This brought

to mind the influence of *materials* within an individual's social world, and how interactions with *materials* and social *objects* can bring meaning to an individual's identity (Scott, 1995). It also brought to mind the implications of social constructions of public spaces, which have been previously argued to be 'gendered' (Allen-Collinson, 2010; 2011a; Wesely & Gaardner, 2004). Therefore, it could be argued that the use of certain buildings and locations may have had a significant bearing upon the course attendees' constructions of their sports leadership identity, as the *materials* they interacted with constituted the *objects* they would interpret (Blumer, 1969) as being associated with 'being' a sports leader.

5.3.2 Range of participants' engagement and motivations

Another surprising facet to me was the range of people who participated with the courses. The Sports Leaders UK website presented the sports leadership course as being orientated towards young people (see appendix A), and so I expected the courses to be attended predominantly by young people between the ages of 16-21. Instead, I witnessed more of an even spread of ages, with the course attendees ranging from 16 years to 50 years old. The inclusion of a greater age range was perhaps a consequence of the 'yo-yo' transitions (Walther, 2006) described in section 2.3.3, with more people now exiting and having to re-enter employment. It could be argued that more individuals were susceptible to 'yo-yo' transitions within Hillside and Municipa due to the high unemployment rates, leading to a wider range of individuals seeking additional qualifications, such as sports leadership, to boost their employment prospects. The course attendees appeared to consist of a somewhat even spread between those who might have been classed as socially excluded, and individuals who viewed the course as a form of continued professional development instead. This range of motivations highlights how the sports leadership course could serve a wide range of purposes for different

individuals. It could also reflect on the uncertainty in the labour and economic environments of the time, which may have presented significant threats to the course attendees' career identities. By attending the sports leadership course, the individuals' motivations might be understood as them taking responsibility for their own employment prospects, stability, and/or transitions (Alvesson *et al*, 2008; Van der Heijder & Van der Heijden, 2006), thereby potentially leading to a stronger sense of employment security and career identity (Doherty, 2009).

Another unexpected occurrence for me was the disparity in the engagement with sport on the courses by individuals. For some, the use of sport was crucial, as both the promise of playing sport and the chance to pursue a career in sport seemed to be important motivations for starting the course. This adds credence to the argument of sport being an effective 'hook' for personal and social development programmes (Feinstein *et al*, 2005; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014; Scheerder *et al*, 2011). However, for other participants the converse was true, with the inclusion of sport viewed merely as an irrelevance. The chance to engage in physical activities, as opposed to sport, seemed to be a greater point of connection for these participants. They seemed to enjoy the space and opportunities the course provided which enabled them to explore their sense of embodied self in a relatively secure environment. While I develop this argument in the following results chapters, it is worth noting here that this point furthers previous discussions surrounding the use of sport in social and personal development courses (Coalter, 2013; Morris *et al*, 2003; Pawson & Tilley, 2004). It seemed that the lure of a 'sport'-for-development course, as opposed to other forms of courses, was not just because of the 'sport' element, but was also due to the opportunity to embody learning. The course attendees seemed able to experience their learning through their bodies and invest their corporeal selves into the course, which is a distinctive characteristic of 'sport'-for-

development courses in comparison to other forms of personal and social development courses.

5.3.3 *Variety of course delivery*

A final reflection which surprised me was the minimal consistency in how the courses were delivered by the tutors. This seemed to be because of the variety of locations and reasons why the course took place, meaning the tutors had to adjust their course delivery as a result. The tutors might then be considered as the link between the social context and the sports leadership course, as the tutors had a substantial bearing on how the course attendees could relate the course to their environment. On the Sports Leaders UK website (see appendix A) the tutor was portrayed as a conduit through which the course materials transfer from Sports Leaders UK to the attendees. Minimal reference was made to the additional responsibilities bestowed upon tutors, which seemed to include pastoral duties, career advice, and relating the sports leadership course to the socio-economic demands of the location, which in Hillside and Municipa centred on unemployment. While previous studies have highlighted the importance of tutors upon participants' sport-for-development experiences (e.g. Spaaij, 2009; 2012), there appears to be minimal discussion regarding the influence tutors have upon the course delivery, and their responsibilities regarding the delivery of consistent learning objectives to varying audiences.

The tutors were not conduits then, but rather delivered the course materials through their own personalised filters of understanding and experiences, in a similar manner to teachers after negotiating their teacher training requirements (Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009). Despite participating in standardised tutor training events, all the tutors I spoke to regarded these as a necessity and

hindrance, as the tutor training did not correspond to the experience of tutoring a sports leadership course. Although the tutor training provided a space for tutors to exchange anecdotes and views of best practice, there was limited time for this to take place (Scott, 2011). Instead, the tutors were required to build up their pedagogy predominantly through their own life experiences, meaning that Sports Leaders UK had no control over the received curriculum of the participants. This could also be why there was no consistency in the delivery of each sports leadership course.

5.4 Summary of reflections from the field

This chapter prefaces the start of the results chapters by exploring my ethnographic reflections regarding how the sports leadership courses were run. I began by providing a brief overview of the Greater Manchester metropolitan county where the research took place, before focusing more specifically on the Hillside and Municipal boroughs where the courses took place, which brought greater attention to the social and economic issues which existed in the data collection sites. This highlighted the role of the course organisers, as the reasons why sports leadership courses were run in particular areas may have been to address the particular needs of the context. This seemed to influence the delivery of each course, and in turn impacted upon the course attendees' sports leadership experiences, meaning that the motivation for running a sports leadership course could be entwined with individuals' motivations for attending. The different socio-economic demands of each location was one reason why each sports leadership course was unique.

By reflecting on my own time in the field of the research, I identified the key differences between each sports leadership course I encountered. This led me to understand there are a multitude of complex factors, relationships, and points of connection and disconnection which require consideration when discussing

individuals' sports leadership experiences. These considerations include the variation in course locations, the range of individuals which constitute the cohort, and the individuality of the tutors' pedagogies. The participants' autonomous negotiation of sports leadership objects and tutors enabled them to establish their own points of connection between the course materials and their identities. In essence, my findings suggest that there can be no homogeneous definition or description of what constitutes a sports leadership experience. This raises questions as to how it is possible to make sense of participants' range of sports leadership experiences, and what any similarities which might exist between individuals' experiences might mean for their sense of self. In Chapter 6, I address these questions further by focusing more on the interviewees' portrayals of their sports leadership experiences.

Chapter 6: Individuals' Experiences of the Sports Leadership Course

Within that week it brings and bonds people together, because that's how you will learn from each other, share experiences, have similarities, have discussions, have debates, have arguments. (Misbah)

Following the previous chapter which focused on my ethnographic experiences of the sports leadership courses from the researcher's perspective, this chapter explores the experiences of the sports leadership courses from the course attendees' viewpoints. The significant themes to emerge from the phenomenologically-inspired data analysis of course attendees' interviews included the social interactions, physical aspects, and relationship with the tutor, although there are various interrelationships. Following the interpretation of the data, themes were clustered and a narrative was 'weaved together', which provides detailed descriptions of their experiences (Creswell, 2009). Participants' reflections are conveyed in their own words where possible, connecting data to theory. The two main themes discussed are *social interactions* and *embodied engagements with the course*.

6.1 Social interactions

This section discusses how course attendees' varying social interactions during the courses appeared to influence their perceptions of their course experiences. These come under the headings of *bonding experiences of the cohort*, *social interactions as a skill*, *interactions with new social actors*, and *relationships with the tutor*.

6.1.1 Bonding experiences of the cohort

The opportunity to interact and share the course experience with other attendees was commonly cited as a positive aspect of the sports leadership course. For many

individuals, being able to meet and communicate with new people seemed to be enjoyable, helped them engage with the course, and seemed to enhance their learning experience. For example, Tahir enjoyed how he “**met new people, different kinds of people**, and obviously...work individually, work as a team, so **you’re learning all the time**, every time you’re in, your mixing. It’s fun as well”. Additionally, Phoebe liked how the sports leadership course was run at the start of her UPS course, “because **a lot of us don’t really like know each other very well**, so obviously it was like, you’re closer with other people than you are with some, so it’s like **building yourself up to be able to communicate with other people that you don’t really know**”. Misbah also cited being able to communicate with different people as influencing his sports leadership experience strongly:

Within that week it **brings and bonds people together**, because that’s how you will **learn from each other, share experiences**, have **similarities**, have **discussions**, have **debates**, have **arguments**, and through that the **bonding**, I think, during the course, we did.

Sharing experiences with new people seemed popular for individuals, especially if they felt as though they might gain something from these new relationships and varied interactions. For instance, Misbah identified the range of ages on his sports leadership course as an opportunity for himself and others to learn:

It was just **bouncing off each other** really and just saying to them well **there’s some things that I know** or we knew that could support the group with, **and there’s some things that the young people knew** [...], it’s all about sharing and caring. **Knowledge is to pass on**, you know, so if we learn something or if I know something I will pass that onto the next, you know, so I’ll say to them well I would’ve done it this way.

Misbah’s quote focuses on interacting as a learning experience. Misbah refers to the *intersubjective* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) nature of his sports leadership experience through the understanding of a shared sense of purpose arising from each

individual, despite their differences in age. There seemed to be a commonality amongst the group in their *intentionality*; consciousness is always consciousness of something and thus directed towards something (Merleau-Ponty, 1986). In this instance, consciousness seemed to be directed towards “the learning experience” in order to “learn”, gain “knowledge”, and ultimately pass the qualification, which necessitated interactions with other course attendees. As such, individuals’ perceptions of their sports leadership experiences were shaped by their intersubjective intentionality and shared ways of inhabiting the course environment with others (Ahmed, 2007). This was displayed by the majority of course attendees when describing their interactions with others in positive terms, closely followed by a positive depiction of their overall course experience.

However, as Csordas (2008) argues, intersubjectivity is an abstract concept due to the inherent subjectiveness involved, which positions meaning as subjective and interaction as objective, “The argument is that one will encounter only intersubjective relations and never social things” (p. 113). Instead, he argues that interactions involving physical “hinges” (p. 111) are more accurately described as *intercorporeal* experiences, which encapsulates the mind-body-world chiasm more adequately (Merleau-Ponty, 1986). In Misbah’s quote above, he hinted at the physical hinge involved in the learning experience of the course, with the cohort “bouncing off each other”. The social elements of the sports leadership course provided physical hinges through the active engagement of course attendees with the course materials, and the requirement to demonstrate their understanding to others. This was also expressed by Nick:

I just wanted to get more **comfortable** and **learn more** because **I learn from people**, even at the voluntary hours, because **anyone can teach you anything new**, you can’t be too old or too young to learn anything new. I think that’s something, I think ok I can

change it up and do my own thing, so **we're helping each other** so, that's what I learnt about, **that's what I liked about it**. Wherever you are there's always **someone who can help you achieve** what you want to do if you're honest so, yeah. [...] Sometimes I think I can do anything myself, but not necessarily, **sometimes it's important to get help**.

Carl also seemed to cite the social environment as being crucial to his enjoyment of the course, and thus a physical hinge, as he “quite enjoyed the main session, the main event, I'd quite like to do, run some more. **I liked getting involved with everybody**, so **telling everybody what to do, telling them if they're doing it right**, seeing if they need any help, just stuff like that”. The social nature of the sports leadership course encouraged the course attendees to participate in a shared embodied experience during their learning, which might be understood as an intercorporeal experience (Weiss, 1999) mediated by the sports leadership course. The course attendees' learning was required to be physically performed in a shared interactive environment, in order to enact their understanding. As Carl said, “getting involved with everybody” involved “telling them” certain aspects of the course materials, which entailed both Carl's perception of his own understanding of the course *and* his perception of how others understood the course. Thus, an individual's performance of their course understanding was subjected to the social gaze of their peers. The learning experience of the sports leadership course involved an interactive intercorporeal experience for each individual, as the physical embodiment and interactions required go beyond the conscious realms of intersubjectivity into a physical medium (Csordas, 2008).

For Isabelle, interacting with others seemed like an intimidating prospect:

I was nervous at first, [...] it's like I don't have a profession in it but, you know. **I felt like intimidated** because **they're all doing it for professions** aren't they, **I'm doing**

it just for the fact I like it. So I was kind of like, oh **they'll know more stuff about it than me** and I'll be the one sat **stood at the back not doing anything.** But it was actually alright, they were all really nice. [...] After a bit I kind of like **opened up more to people** and had more of a laugh and was able to like see, you know like **not everyone's like judging you** or anything

Indeed, the initial thought of having to interact with individuals from a range of professional backgrounds, who she perceived to be attending the course for their professional development in contrast to her own motivation, was threatening to her perception of self. Isabelle's initial perceptions about the other course attendees seemed to elicit anxieties. Because she thought they were "all doing it for professions", she felt a difference between her motivation and others'. It seemed that this difference created a bit of a distance with others on the course, which may have acted as a potential barrier to her interactions with others. The fear of being judged by others meant that she stood back from engaging with them in order to save *face* (Goffman, 1972), which may have influenced her learning experience by distancing herself from the role of a learner on the course (Goffman, 1961b). After the course, however, she seemed to feel as though she was able to open up to the others, possibly due to her interpretation of receiving encouraging responses from the other participants during social interactions where she felt as though she "had more of a laugh", thus providing encouragement during her self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974) and influencing her efforts of *impression management* (Goffman, 1959). As she perceived that "not everyone's like judging you", this reduced her fear of losing *face* (Goffman, 1972). Her negotiation of her sense of self on the course with regard to her interactions with others seemed to validate her motivations for doing the course, and reinforced her sense of sports leadership identity. During the course, Isabelle was able to "open up more to people" and have "a laugh" with the other attendees, and found them "all really nice", all of which points towards Isabelle

interpreting the actions of the other social actors (Mead, 1927) as being congruent with her own motivations for the course. The social interactions Isabelle discussed alluded to how she seemed able to construct situational meanings (Blumer, 1969) about the course with the others, by associating her experience of the course with having “a laugh” with her peers, as opposed to being judged for “doing it just for the fact I like it” as she initially feared would be the case. This finding provides further support and insight into the importance of peer interactions on individuals’ experiences of sport-for-development courses.

A few participants highlighted a few instances of disruptive interactions during their courses. Nick said that he did not like “people coming like and wasting peoples’ time. **If you’re not here for a reason then there’s no point in coming**”, whereas Phoebe experienced problems when in a large group, and argued that:

If there were only two or three of you there’s more chance of everybody speaking but obviously in some groups you get more people that are a bit more quiet and some that are a bit more outspoken. A lot of the time though with some of the more outspoken people **it felt as though they were putting a downer on the others who were quiet**, which is why a lot of people don’t say anything.

Similarly, Myrtle thought there were benefits to the groups being smaller, “because **you’d have some like cocky ones** and some who were just trying to be the **class joker** all of the time and, erm, **some others who just weren’t interacting** and they just didn’t, **weren’t interested in it**”. The course attendees noted the different expectations of each other and seemed to express that the larger the group, the fewer the meaningful interactions took place. The differing agendas of others could have been interpreted by the individual as a waste of their time. When interacting in everyday situations, Goffman (1972) argues there is an *interaction ritual*, as there are expectations held by each actor regarding how the interaction should take place.

If these expectations are not met by one individual, then the other may attempt to restore the ceremonial order through *alienating* the individual, which can disrupt the interaction and potentially taint future interactions. In these instances, the expectations of the interviewees do not appear to have been met, as their investment in the interaction has not been perceived to have been matched by other. Hence, the interviewees who labelled others as a “class joker” or “outspoken” may have been attempting to *alienate* them from the discourse. The potential for *personal disengagement* (Kahn, 1990) could have been heightened for the interviewees; they may have been unwilling to invest their selves into social interactions with the actors they interpreted as disruptive.

Overall, the social nature of the sports leadership courses could have influenced individuals’ perceptions of their course experiences. For the majority of interviewees these interactions enhanced their learning experience, as the meanings they brought to being a ‘sports leader’ were reaffirmed when others displayed similar behaviours (Blumer, 1969). The intercorporeality (Weiss, 1999) of *doing* a sports leadership course enabled individuals to perform their understanding of the course with their peers, although there were also instances of *role distancing* (Goffman, 1961b) evident in some interviewees’ descriptions, which indicated the potential for *personal disengagement* (Kahn, 1990). These performances of sports leadership identities allude to the potential of mutual constructions being made between course attendees through investments in social interactions which were oriented towards achieving the sports leadership qualification.

6.1.2 Social interactions as a skill

Many of the interviewees made reference to their perceptions of different aspects of social interactions being an important skill, both for the sports leadership

qualification and in wider contexts. For Daisy, a reason why she went on the course was to develop her social skills for use in other areas, such as for future employment opportunities:

I did my sports leaders **for my confidence**, because I wanted to be able to demonstrate and stand up in a group of people and say right we're going to do this and **take control**. [...] I know that I'm not ready to go into teaching because **I'm a bit scared** and **a bit nervous** about delivering a session of coaching and organising that. [...]

Daisy discussed how she felt she lacked the ability to communicate and interact with groups of people, and how she believed she could learn confidence through the sports leadership course, which she seemed to feel was necessary in pursuing certain career paths. Indeed, the course highlighted how “confidence is a big point for me, **the leadership course has taught me that**, which is good. It's like **close communication skills**, if that's a thing”. Daisy discussed how she used these skills in her newly-found coaching work after the course, when “after I think the 3rd session I just felt comfortable and I just...I just got on with it really”. Confidence is not an absolute fixed state, and so Daisy's confidence seemed to develop during the course. She seemed to ‘work out’ and perform ways corporeally that showed more confidence to others, such as “standing up in a group of people” and “taking control”, which enabled her to “deliver”, “coach”, and “teach”. Daisy's social interactions on the sports leadership course could be understood through Merleau-Ponty's conception of the subjective-objective *chiasm* (1986) which is the zero point of an individual's perception of experience. Daisy seemed to employ a range of *impression management* strategies and *studentship* behaviours (Graber, 1991) in order to portray the behaviours deemed appropriate to pass the course and achieve the qualification. When employing these strategies, Daisy seemed to grow more accustomed to feelings of confidence when communicating with groups of people.

Therefore, the sports leadership course might be said to have provided her with the space to explore her corporeal confidence when engaging in such social situations.

Two other interviewees identified how they might apply the interaction skills they learned from the course into other areas of their lives, such as Phoebe, who was surprised “**how much you actually come out of yourself**, even with it just being with your peers with people that you actually know, **it could actually help you** in the services actually like, having to form the troops or having to speak in front of people like”. Nick also reflected on how he might be able to utilise his newly-developed interaction skills:

Meeting new people is hard but now it’s **taught me** that wherever you go you meet new people, you like **get used to them**, [...] like if I’m with my friends I can say what I want, but you have to be careful with new people as they have **different personalities**, so that’s **my thinking now**. [...] I think it will give us, like **how to be confident**, and then like louder and give instructions and everything, and then if something happens you have to be more louder, basically **take charge**, I learnt what it’s like to be in charge, like I learned **the skills** of how to be in charge.

As with Daisy’s quotes, the acts of “leadership” and “taking charge” are perceived to be valuable to Phoebe and Nick. These acts are defined by the individual’s performance during social interactions – not just vocally, but also in corporeal and emotional terms. The experience of learning to “come out of yourself”, as Phoebe described the experience, involved overcoming feelings of discomfort when corporeally interacting with peers, and alludes to the mind-body-world negotiation (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) such an experience entails. This lived experience of overcoming discomfort through interactions is envisaged by Phoebe to be of use in the future. Similarly, for Nick the distinction between “friends” and “new people” is noted as a potential challenge to his social interactions. Through the sports

leadership course he seemed to gain greater consciousness of his performances, as well as greater consciousness regarding how he was required to reflect on social contexts in order to potentially adapt his presentation of self (Goffman, 1959) in the future.

In Isabelle's case, it was only when she was forced to perform that she joined in. She seemed to subject herself to the time-limited interactions imposed by the course:

The first day I went **I didn't want to talk to anyone**, I was just kind of like oh **I've hurt myself I'm not joining in** and **I'm not talking to anyone**, and then the more it went on like the more it was right you have to partner up, right you're going to have to do this, right you're going to have to plan and talk to people and do it. It's like even though **I didn't want to do it I had to do it to finish the course** and actually get the qualification, [...] I mean **I was feeling more confident** with volunteering but it was like the leadership course itself that really, you know because volunteering it's a **progressive thing**, like over a certain amount of weeks, so I'd be like, **I decided** oh I might talk to someone this week, and then 2 weeks later I was like, oh I don't want to now, you know I'd **just keep going back and forth, back and forth**, and only a little bit. But with the course, because it was only 5 days, so **I had no choice**, it wasn't oh well you know I'll do it next week, I'll talk to that person in a couple of weeks you know when I've built up enough confidence, it was like **you're going to have to do it now because you've got no choice**.

Isabelle seemed to demonstrate an initial reluctance to socialise with the other course attendees. In Leder's (1990b) terms, her *dys-appearing* body drew her consciousness towards her injury, which resulted in an embodied experience of discomfort in her lifeworld, including while volunteering. However, she was conscious of the temporal nature of the course which encouraged her to step out of

her comfort zone in order to attain the sports leadership qualification. Her social interactions provide an interesting insight into the influence the temporality had upon her strategies for *impression management* (Goffman, 1959), as being forced by the tutors to get involved in the course with more immediacy appeared to disrupt her *backstage* preparation (Goffman, 1959). Even though Isabelle noted how she was used to similar situations being a “progressive thing”, and so she found this initially daunting, Isabelle cited it as a source of confidence building from the course, or *personal engagement* (Kahn, 1990) which helped to reaffirm the identity which she presented as being socially accepted.

The social interactions which constituted the sports leadership courses seemed to be viewed by most interviewees as an important skill when participating with the qualification. Furthermore, the importance of developing this skill through the course in order to use it in other social contexts was discussed by some as crucial. The importance of *impression management* was emphasised by the interviewees in terms of performing a sense of confidence, as was the embodied nature of developing these skills, with Merleau-Ponty’s (1986) concept of mind-body-world relationship being applied to discuss the relationship between the emotions felt and physical performances of social interactions. The *lived* bodily experience (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) of interacting with others provided a valuable learning experience for interviewees, and enabled them to engage their selves with the intercorporeal social interactions. The ways in which the course encouraged the interactions to be developed were positively received by most course attendees, with the temporal constraints of the course providing motivation for individuals to actively engage in interactions in order to gain the qualification.

6.1.3 Interactions with new social actors

During the voluntary hours of the sports leadership course almost all the course attendees worked with children and disabled people for the first time, and for half of the interviewees this was their first encounter with these social groups. These engagements were typically met with initial nerves followed by positive reflections upon the experience. For example, Jordan was not “too confident with kids before”, but expressed greater comfort when interacting with children following the course:

I am much more confident with them now. And it’s made me more like **confident as a person** as well, yeah because it’s just like **trying to overcome your fears** isn’t it really (laughs). [...] I just **feel more comfortable** around them now, yeah.

Jordan confronted her anxieties about working with children and would seem to have developed her self-confidence through her social interactions with them through the sports leadership course. Her interactions with the children and consequent sense of personal development was an indication that the new social setting of the course influenced Jordan’s perception of her identity. Her sense of confidence “with them now” would seem to have stemmed from her “trying to overcome (her) fears” by engaging with this new group of social actors. An enhanced understanding of the meanings this group brought to their interactions informed Jordan’s actions for any future meetings with similar groups (Scott, 1995), leading her to express a feeling of being more “confident as a person as well”.

Similarly, Myrtle had initial fears when it came to working with disabled children as part of her voluntary hours for the sports leadership course, as she “didn’t think I’d be able to work with children with disabilities, **I didn’t think I had it in me**”. Her experiences with disabled individuals appeared to be transformative in her perceptions of disabled individuals and her sense of self:

When Catherine said to me you're going with the disabled people I was really shitting myself because, **I thought I couldn't cope** with that, **I don't know how to deal with that**, but **I think I dealt with it kind of ok**. [...] I thought it was **absolutely amazing**, **I got such a thrill out of it**, [...] while I have been doing it **I've seen a different side to me** and **I've liked that side that's come out**. So it's **changed me inside and outside**.

Her interpretation of the *framing rules* (Hochschild, 1979) of the social encounter before she started seemed to lead her to experience emotional dissonance between how she *expected* to feel and how she perceived she *should* feel in this social setting, "I thought I couldn't cope with that, I don't know how to deal with that". However, once she engaged with these new social actors her perceptions seemed to change. Myrtle did not allude to any feelings or behaviours relating to *emotion management* or *deep acting*, as she found the experience to be "absolutely amazing". Additionally, Myrtle described her experiences with the disabled children as being a "thrill" and "rewarding", which she directly linked to her seeing a "different side to me" which had "changed me inside and outside". As phenomenology argues that an individual's experiences are perceived through their *lived body*, Myrtle's perception of herself could be interpreted through Merleau-Ponty's (1986) conceptions of *body image* and *body schema*¹¹. The marginal consciousness of Myrtle's *body schema* could explain an unconscious response which occurred through her conscious (and thus *intentional*) acts of interacting with this new social group. This experience resulted in a revised *body image*, which Myrtle consciously related to her experiences of interacting with the disabled children to conclude that "you get **more of a thrill** out of it than you do working with **normal children** or **normal adults**". It is worth noting that Myrtle's contrasting descriptions of "disabled

¹¹ Although commonly used together or interchangeably, *body image* and *body schema* are used as separate entities here following Gallagher's (1986) clarification of the terms.

children” with “normal children” perhaps reflects on the limited experiences she has previously had with disabled children, and a discrepancy between her perception of the *virtual social identity* and *actual social identity* (Goffman, 1963) of the disabled individuals she works with still exists. Whilst in this instance she does not seem to be discussing the individuals in a negative context, Myrtle risks perpetuating the *stigma* around disabled individuals if she continues to ‘other’ them (Goffman, 1963).

Nick had also not previously worked with disabled children, and so he seemed to initially view the voluntary hours as something which had to be done to gain the sports leadership qualification, as he “didn’t really want to go to be honest, I thought it was just rubbish”. Once he started interacting with the disabled children, he described how he identified with their desire to have fun, and embraced his responsibilities in making that happen:

The first time I saw them **I didn’t know what to do**, like I don’t know if I was just nervous, like you don’t know what they might **expect of you** or maybe they might not like you. But anyway they were just like normal, **just like us**, they just want to **have fun** so it was awesome, it was good. Before if I’d seen someone disabled, erm, I might not talk to them, **I would be scared to talk to them**. I did get something, **I should just be myself**, don’t pretend to be someone else, just be myself and talk to them, because they want to be themselves with other people. So that’s **one of the key things I learned**, was just be yourself and treat people normally. [...] **I’ve changed my attitude now because you can still have fun**, because I was there and I was having fun, **fun with different people**.

Socially symbolically mediated perceptions of “fun” appear to have been constructed *between* Nick and the disabled children (Mead, 1927), which led Nick to change his attitude, “because you can still have fun [...] with different people”. This point of connection seemed to enable Nick to build a social relationship with the disabled

children, and shifted his perceptions of what “fun” might mean to other people, as well as himself. His sense of “fun” appeared to provide a source of *personal engagement* (Kahn, 1990) to the voluntary hours. Initially he appeared to feel a certain unease about the encounter, which arose from not knowing “what they might expect of you”, leading him to feel “scared to talk to them”. This could be interpreted as Nick originally sensing he *should* act and feel in a way that was “appropriate to the situation” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 552) in order to meet the expectations he perceived were required of him through “deep acting” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561). Once he overcame these fears through interacting with the disabled children, he described how he felt comfortable investing more of his self into the encounter and feelings of personal engagement. This seemed to lead Nick to experience personal development, and encouraged him to “just be myself” in future interactions with new social actors.

The social interactions that these interviewees encountered with new social actors appeared to be a source of personal development. Other interviewees also alluded to the benefits gained from interacting with these new groups, such as Tahir, who had “worked with youths before but never disabled people. It was different, **a new challenge**, but something **I enjoyed** at the same time”, and Phoebe, who claimed “**it helps you**, [...] because like you were **having to teach people that you didn’t know**, and like I didn’t know the little girls, I were having to get used to them and the way that you word things around people”. The meanings these interviewees brought to their social encounters seemed to be altered as they interpreted the meanings of the new others they interacted with (Blumer, 1969). Socially mediated understandings of the social world both parties inhabited during those voluntary hours were negotiated and constructed, which appeared to lead the interviewees to

express positive understandings of their experiences which affected them on a personal level.

6.1.4 Relationship with the tutor

Another seemingly important social actor during the sports leadership course was the tutor, or tutors, who delivered their course. As alluded to in section 5.3.3, the tutors are the main link between the course attendees and Sports Leaders UK, as it is through the tutors that course attendees come to experience the sports leadership course. However, rather than being the conduits through which Sports Leaders UK's materials are steadily transferred, instead the tutors' deliveries of the courses were highly individualised and dependent on factors such as size of the cohort, purpose of the course, and location of the course. The personal characteristics of the tutor are also worthy of consideration, as their pedagogy appeared to be influenced more by their own previous coaching and tutor experiences, rather than through any formalised training (see also Scott, 2011). Indeed, the ways in which the tutors interacted with the course attendees, and the influence this had on the reciprocity of social interactions between the course attendees and the tutors, appeared to have a noteworthy bearing on individuals' experiences of the sports leadership course.

Almost all the Morningside Community Centre and Hawthorn Ridge Community Centre interviewees identified the role of the tutor enhancing their experience through being supportive, encouraging, and understanding. For instance, Jordan noted that "everyone that was teaching us and everything, like **Catherine**, they were **really good at what they were doing**, it **really helped me** do everything". Myrtle seemed equally as grateful, as she felt as though she needed to "keep saying **thank you to Catherine**, because **if it wasn't for Catherine I wouldn't have got**

anywhere". Additionally, Isabelle cited Catherine as being an important reason as to why she completed the course:

If she hadn't have been there, **I don't think I'd have carried** on with it, just for the fact that I was so nervous. [...] So yeah **Catherine was dead important** when I first started, literally **if she hadn't have been the one pushing me on** to do that **I would've just quit**, so just because of confidence issues not because I didn't want to do it.

It could be argued that the interviewees' interpretations of the course were shaped through their interpretation of their interactions with the tutors, as "the most important elements of the external world that actors must interpret are other people and their actions" (Scott, 1995, p. 102). As such, the symbolically mediated meanings (Blumer, 1969) of course attendees' understandings of the sports leadership materials could have been strongly influenced by the tutors, particularly as they were in a relative position of authority (Dennis & Martin, 2005). Of particular interest is that the interviewees only referred to Catherine, whose role was orientated more towards pastoral duties and career development planning with the course attendees. Although James' role was not criticised by the interviewees, it seemed as though his role of only delivering the course may have distanced him from the cohort. It is also notable that none of the interviewees from the Pencey FE College course referred to their tutors' influences on their experiences, which may have been because their engagement with the tutors continued throughout their UPS course. This indicates that the more authoritarian positions, as perceived by the course attendees, of James, Stanley, and Gail, did not resonate as strongly with the interviewees compared with Catherine's more companionable role. This suggests that rather than being *institutionalised* (Goffman, 1961a) by the sports leadership course, the interviewees were instead able to negotiate their own meanings and roles during their sports leadership experiences.

Of further consideration is that the interviewees who did cite Catherine as being a positive influence on their sports leadership course were all females. This perhaps indicates that their gendered *situatedness* on the course was a strong influence on their perceptions of their experiences, which is an aspect frequently overlooked in social studies (Allen-Collinson, 2011a). This suggests that Catherine's performances within the gendered space of the sports leadership course was brought more into consciousness by these female interviewees, as they were situated within the patriarchal setting of sport (Allen-Collinson, 2011a; Talbot, 2002). The relationship between some of the interviewees and Catherine also seemingly led them to view her as a form of role model. For instance, Isabelle imagined that "if I got bored at my job **I could then take up like what Catherine does** you know, coaching and stuff, **I'd like that**". Myrtle also saw Catherine's role as something to aspire to, as "**if it wasn't for Catherine** I wouldn't have gone through with sunsport and inspired sports, **I wouldn't be on the records with them**, so again that's Catherine that's done that and **inspired me** too, you know". Additionally, Daisy considered how her own future plans compared with Catherine's career:

Sometimes I see myself like Catherine, like the way she worked her way up, and then sometimes I see myself as her. I don't know, because **I'd like a similar job role** that Catherine's doing. I've seen her do it, I've seen her doing it from the sports leader course and I've seen her now doing it at college and I think she's got like, **I like the road she's going down** so I think **I might take that road**, yeah, or try anyway (laughs)!"

During their interactions with Catherine, it seems that these interviewees identified with the role that Catherine performed during the sports leadership course. As such, their perceptions of their *preferred selves* (Kahn, 1990) may have been influenced by Catherine's performances, leading either to a realignment or reaffirmation regarding the identity they wished to achieve through their sports leadership

participation. These findings bring to light the influence of the tutor upon the individuals' sports leadership experiences, particularly in terms of the *situatedness* of individuals during these social interactions.

6.1.5 Social interactions summary

The interviewees' experiences of the sports leadership courses seemed to be heavily influenced by the social interactions they encountered, and thus may be described as *socially mediated*. While the delivery of the courses encouraged the participants to engage with each other, the individuals expressed their awareness of the benefits of developing their social interaction skills, not just in gaining the sports leadership qualification but also in wider social settings such as employment. Thus, the social interactions were purposive, with consciousness being directed (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) towards building interaction skills with other individuals. As most of the course attendees seemed to share similar motivations, shared meanings regarding the course were able to be socially constructed between individuals (Blumer, 1969) and experienced *intercorporeally* (Csordas, 2008), with individuals seemingly able to engage personally and invest their identities into the encounters (Kahn, 1990). The interactions occurred not just verbally, but also through physical and emotional sensations, resulting in a *lived* bodily experience (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) of social interactions. These findings provide deeper and more personal understandings of the importance of social interactions within the sport-for-development literature than have previously been discussed.

6.2 Embodied engagements with the course

This section discusses course attendees' physical interactions during the courses, and how such corporeal engagements may have influenced their perceptions of their course experiences. These come under the headings of *embodied learning* and *embodied identity*.

6.2.1 Embodied learning

The physical nature of the course delivery was noted by almost all interviewees as a particularly enjoyable aspect of the sports leadership course. Nick identified the high quantity of physical games being played, as “The main thing **I enjoyed** was the **sports**. Most of the time we were **doing activities**, [...] that was good.” Tahir seemed to agree, as he noted the enjoyment he gained from being able to participate in the physical activities, making “the course more **fun and enjoyable** because you’re running around, playing games.” Jordan also noted “it was really enjoyable yeah, getting to take part in some sports”. The physical activities which constituted the course seemed to provide a point of connection for individuals’ *personal engagement* (Kahn, 1990) with the course delivery. Furthermore, the sports-hall based physical activities were contrasted with “classroom” based courses, which highlighted how the course attendees felt able to invest more of their selves into their learning. For instance, Myrtle exclaimed “**I enjoyed it more** because it was more **hands on** and **you learnt more by doing it**, if it was in a classroom I think it would’ve got **boring**”. Her sense of investment was expressed through her “doing”, “enjoying”, and “learning more” through the corporeal nature of the course, which enabled her to *personally engage* with the course (Kahn, 1990). She contrasted this with a different scenario involving a “classroom”, which would have made the course “boring” for her and less likely that she would invest her personal self into the tasks, thus leading to a higher chance of experiencing *personal disengagement*.

Similarly, the participants on the Pencey FE College course also made comparisons between the sports leadership course and the use of more formal classroom-based learning. They were able to make direct comparisons between different settings on the course as some of their sessions took place in classrooms usually utilised for

their UPS course. Maurice identified the time when his cohort was taught about stretches for different muscle groups, where he disengaged with the course delivery due to it being taught in a formal manner:

I mean **obviously I enjoy doing practical sessions rather than classroom stuff** [...]. It's like when we were in the classroom and staff had us drawing like stick men of the stretches, **it's harder to pick it up than it is just doing them**, you do it then you pick it up easier.

Sally concurred, arguing that "I'd learn better if I could do what we were actually doing instead of just drawing stick men". Both Carl and Phoebe also noted that the written work they were required to do detracted from their embodied sports leadership experience, with Carl remarking that he "didn't really like the paperwork, but once you've got that done you've got all your practical then, so that's the bit you enjoy. [...] I'm more of a hands on person, the written works rubbish isn't it?". This was echoed by Phoebe:

You'd think that they'd go through it all with you **practically** wouldn't you because you'd think like **the people that are doing this course are a bit more hands on**, because **if you did have the brains you'd go to 6th form** or something, but it's a bit more of a hands on course so **I don't understand why they make you do it on paper**.

The interviewees' lamentations of the more formal aspects of their sports leadership course shows how they *personally disengaged* (Kahn, 1990) with those elements of the delivery. By feeling estranged with the tasks being asked of them, the interviewees withdrew and protected their selves by disconnecting with the tasks and detaching their self from the role being asked of them. The sports leadership course is advertised as an alternative approach to formal education (as discussed in appendix A), and so the course attendees' expectations of the course may not have been met, leading to *disengagement* (Kahn, 1990). In his study, Kahn (1990)

uses a grounded theory approach to discuss the roles individuals occupy at work, and the differing psychological conditions which influence their self-investment into these roles. Similar to lifelong learning, the sports leadership course employed greater informal and non-formal settings in its delivery in order to engage with those who have been disaffected by formal educational settings (as discussed in section 5.3). This was something which Phoebe noted in the above quote when she questioned “why they make you do it on paper”, despite identifying herself and her peers as “more hands on”, which Sally, Carl, and Maurice also self-identify with. This *disengagement* from the course resulted in less investment of their selves with this aspect of the course materials, as evidenced by their *studentship* behaviours (Graber, 1991). For instance, Sally claimed she did not complete her written work herself, and instead “I just took someone else’s home and copied it”, whereas Maurice did not enjoy the written work on “the competitions one, I didn’t really like that me, I had to blag it in the end. I’d forgotten it was even a lesson until now”. Through “copying” and “blagging” information in order to pass the qualification, before subsequently “forgetting” what was taught, these individuals displayed *studentship* characteristics (Graber, 1991) which indicated *impression management* (Goffman, 1959) and *surface acting* (Hochschild, 1979) techniques. This resulted in a negotiated learning experience whereby the individuals connected mostly with the physical elements of the sports leadership course, and largely dismissed the content which did not allow them to embody or perform their understanding of it.

The way in which the sports leadership course was delivered was an important consideration for all the courses, especially in terms of individuals engaging with the physical aspects of the course. Again, the opportunities for embodied learning proved vital for Isabelle in her understanding of the content, although for different reasons from those from Pencey FE College:

It's like we got taught all the theory side and then it got put into practice so it **got drilled into your head a lot better**, [...] obviously I'm a **kinaesthetic learner** I learn by doing, so it really helped me, because obviously being **dyslexic** if **I was just sat down** and writing and them just telling me **I wouldn't have learned**.

In identifying herself as a kinaesthetic learner, Isabelle was referring to Fleming's (1995) *learning modalities*, which also comprise of *visual*, *auditory*, and *read/write* learning. The theory of learning modalities might help to explain why Isabelle and other interviewees connected with the practical delivery of the course, as it enabled them to learn experientially, although the theoretical basis and validation of tools used in these theories have been heavily criticised (e.g. Coffield 2012). Additionally, Isabelle seemed to link her kinaesthetic learning preference to her dyslexia, which hints that she might have previously experienced *stigma* (Goffman, 1963) in more formal learning settings where she was "just sat down and writing". Such an experience may have resulted in her feeling *different* from her peers, leading to constant identity renegotiations. Rather, the pedagogy of the sports leadership courses was constructed around participants physically performing their understandings, which enabled Isabelle to feel included within the learning setting. Thus, it is possible that she was not required to save *face* through *impression management* (Goffman, 1959), and could instead construct her own meaningful interpretations of the *objects* (Blumer, 1969) of the sports leadership course (i.e. the course materials and content) through her embodied understandings.

It was also notable that the integration of both corporeal and cognitive elements within the learning and assessment enabled Isabelle to experience her learning through her *lived body* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986). As the *lived body* is posited as the site of an individual's perception (Merleau-Ponty, 1986), the course content and practical demonstrations can be described as being experienced through an

individual's *embodied consciousness*, thus leading to the cognitive information and practical demonstration elements of the course becoming inseparably intertwined within Isabelle's perception. Isabelle explained how the use of her body in her learning enabled the content to "**get drilled into (her) head better**", which might indicate an embedded learning experience within her mind-body-world relationship (Merleau-Ponty, 1986). Using this, it might be claimed that her *lived* body is both the site of the learning and the medium of her perception of the learning. Misbah also referred to the practical-theory nexus:

A lot of the stuff was to do with the **practical side of it**, it was not too, there was not too much theory, but the **informed theory had to be there** so that **people knew** where, you know, what areas they need to discuss and if there's anything that they need to be aware of. But the practical side of it was actually **demonstrating that**, has everybody got the **ability to lead**, erm because they wanted us to **become leaders**.

As Misbah noted, the demonstrations were an opportunity for course attendees to perform their leadership abilities. His use of the term "*become*" leaders suggests a deeper understanding of what it means to lead was required in order to perform as a sports leader. The notion of *becoming* a sports leader through greater embodied investment was also identified by Daisy:

We didn't do as much theory did we? But it was still, it was still good, **I understand why** we all didn't do as much theory because again it is about **presenting**, about **leading**, about **taking control**, and **confidence**, I understand that aspect.

Comparisons can be drawn with Morley's (2001) exploration of the *lived* body in yoga practices, where he contends that the exteriority of bodily practices converge with the interiority of an individual's perception, "where are we to put the limit between the body and the world, since the world is flesh?" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968; cited in Morley, 2001, p. 77). The demonstrations might be further understood

through *reversibility* (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). The theory and practice of *becoming* a sports leader are perceived through the individual's *lived* body, and so the individual must *become* a leader through the gaze of the world they inhabit; they are both the observer and observed in relation to their sports leader identity (Morley, 2001). A mutual construction is formed between the individual's interior understanding of what being a sports leader involves and their external bodily visibility, as well as between the individual's self and the exteriority of the sports leadership world (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). To draw from Morley (2001), "The identity of the practitioner (or in this case, sports leader) is not extracted from the observable but is experienced as a totality that joins the observer and the observed" (p.78). Thus, the individual's perception of becoming a sports leader involved not just a visual demonstration which was assessed by the tutors, but also an interwoven understanding of what being a sports leader means within the individual's mind-body-world chiasm. *Becoming* a sports leader required a personal investment of the individual's self into the course experience, rather than simply being 'learned'.

It is also worth noting that the involvement of the individual's body within their learning experience can also be described as an active engagement with the learning environment (Chappell *et al*, 2003); or as Zeitner and colleagues adroitly term it, "the moving body is a site for discovery" (2016, p. 173). Through this active engagement, an individual can hence be seen as *becoming* a sports leader, in the manner posited by Hager and Hodkinson (2009). In this sense, *becoming* involves negotiating the learning experience within the individual's ever-changing life experiences. Hager and Hodkinson (2009) posit that knowledge is not a 'thing' which can be 'transferred', but instead is a "relational web" (p. 630) between the learner and their environment. Thus, in educational terms, the course attendees learned to *become* sports leaders through corporeal pedagogic practices of the tutors, which

reflected upon the relationships between the tutors, course attendees, Sports Leaders UK, and the social context of the courses (Zukas & Malcom, 2002). Learning to *become* a sports leader in the manner Hager and Hodkinson (2009) contend has clear links with the individual's reversible relationship between their lived body and their world (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). In both understandings, the individual is irrevocably intertwined with the world they inhabit, both influencing and being influenced by each other, with a mutual construction about what it means to *become* a sports leader emerging.

Interviewees seemed to embrace the opportunity to embody their learning on the sports leadership course. Experiences of *personal engagement* (Kahn, 1990) were expressed by several interviewees, which were supported by expressions of *personal disengagement* (Kahn, 1990) when the opportunity to embody learning was not apparent. In the most notable case of a formal learning setting being used on the Pencey FE College course, some of the interviewees described employing *studentship* behaviours (Graber, 1991) to 'get through' that section of the delivery, before re-engaging with the rest of the embodied aspects of the course. In understanding the learning on the course as embodied and experienced through each individual's *lived body*, it can be claimed that individuals were able to experience a unique and personal sense of how it feels to *become* a sports leader. The close association between Hager and Hodkinson's (2009) *becoming*, and Merleau-Ponty's (1968, 1986) depictions of how the *lived body* experiences and is experienced within its world, helps to explain how the learning might have influenced the individual's identity of becoming a sports leader.

6.2.2 Embodied identity

The embodied learning experienced by individuals on the sports leadership course appeared to influence a few interviewees' everyday lives as well. One of the most noteworthy examples was Myrtle, who discussed how she perceived to have changed as a person through her participation with the course:

Before I were just mumsy and that was it, throw something on and take them to school before coming back home again and **not doing anything**, [...] I didn't get dressed, I didn't want to leave the house, **I didn't want to do anything**. [...] **But now** it's just like, **no**. I've even started running, well I do running 3 or 4 times a week. So I'm doing running, I do the swimming lessons, and before the swimming lessons I'll do 20 minutes in the pool once a week, yeah. **I'm not** one of these who like slob around in their pyjamas and **doesn't do anything**, I want to be up and **doing something**.

Myrtle described herself before the course as "mumsy", which she characterised as taking her children to school and "not doing anything", and not even "*wanting* to do anything". This could be described as Myrtle's *intentionality* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) only being directed towards her role as a mother. *Intentionality* describes the individual's perception of phenomena, and reflects on the interwoven relationship between individual's perceptions, actions, and the world; consciousness is always conscious of something (Merleau-Ponty, 1986). Merleau-Ponty identifies two types of *intentionality* – *operative intentionality*, which is the individual's pre-reflective perception of their relationship with the world, and *act intentionality*, which is the individual's conscious interactions within the world that are informed by their *operational intentionality*. In this instance, it could be suggested that Myrtle's *operative intentionality* before attending the course was almost entirely influenced by being a mother, with her being-in-the-world consisting in *act intentionality* which projected her actions and intentions mainly towards her understanding of what being a mother was. However, by attending the sports leadership course, Myrtle seemed

to be using her body for the physical tasks involved in the delivery of the course in a manner which suggests that her *act intentionality* was directed at something different than being a mother. As a result, Myrtle's conscious position of directing her *act intentionality* towards tasks which had meaning for herself rather than her family may have influenced her *operative intentionality*, as each are posited as reciprocally informing the other (Evans, 1993). The sense of achievement and confidence Myrtle gained through her new perception of her sense of self, which was influenced by her bodily *intentionality* being positioned towards the physical nature of the course, also appeared to influence her bodily *intentionality* in her everyday life. The self-esteem she experienced through these corporeal acts seemed to lead her to pursue further bodily experiences, both for her leisure and in her career search. Her depictions of increased physical activity and greater corporeal usage of her body leads me to argue that Myrtle may have experienced a new embodied identity while participating on the sports leadership course.

Although there is not enough data to draw from to discuss in terms of phenomenological *intentionality*, the individuals' intentions and motivations for participating with the course, and how these might influence their experiences of other settings in individuals' lives, was echoed by Nick. When he discussed his search for employment after the course, he argued that "you can't just sit down **not doing things**, I'm not like, sitting down all day is boring, watching TV all day every day is boring, I don't like it. I'd rather just **do something**". Daisy also hinted how her motivation to use her body influenced her choice of employment, as "I did my placement working with nursery children and **I found it a bit boring**. Some of them were cheeky and I enjoyed it but I found it really boring, so I thought I need to do something **more energetic**". Although these interviewees did not exhibit a change in their perceptions in the same way as Myrtle, they did indicate that their identities

were already highly influenced by their corporeality, and preferred directing their consciousness towards physical tasks, such as the sports leadership course. The sports leadership course might therefore be understood as encouraging individuals to explore their embodied identity throughout the course by using *act intentionality* to change or strengthen individuals' *operative intentionality*. These embodied identities can then be drawn upon in wider settings, most notably the employment sector, which is an area Sports Leaders UK wish to impact upon (see appendix A).

Additionally, there may be gendered implications within Myrtle's perception of herself as "**mumsy**". It could be suggested that her *situatedness* was largely defined by her role as a woman and a mother, which is a typically overlooked aspect of an individuals' *situatedness* (Allen-Collinson, 2011a). She seemed to view herself as the primary care giver for her children, possibly due to traditional patriarchal discourses of parenting (de Beauvoir, 1989), which might have made her feel restricted in the roles she was able to adopt as a female, and thus her body corporeality (Young, 1980). Young discusses how a female's corporeality is indicative of their sense of being-in-the-world which, when applied to Myrtle's comments, would suggest she felt limited in expressing her embodied self through her role as a mother. By experiencing the sports leadership course through her *lived body* she seemed to grow more comfortable in her corporeality and gained confidence in using her body in new ways, with less concern about the patriarchal gaze that sought to objectify her body spatiality (Young, 1980). Myrtle's embodied experiences on the sports leadership course may have influenced her bodily *intentionality* in settings outside of the course, which enabled her to feel safer in using her body in a wider variety of social situations than she previously did (Allen-Collinson, 2011a).

Another interviewee who seemed to be influenced by the embodied nature of the course within her everyday life was Isabelle. She discussed how participating on the course helped her recover from injuries which had blighted her self-esteem in the past:

When I was a younger age [...], I got poorly, ill, **couldn't walk, arthritis in my knees**, all that hospital stuff and then that kind of **knocked it all back**, so it took me ages to, ages to **build up a little bit of confidence** again. [...] It was good recovery after the operation on my ankle, I could **test what my boundaries** were as well with my ankle, because at first I couldn't do anything, and then by the end of it I was there running about and everything I was like yeah, it's like **I've got my confidence back on my foot**, so it was really good. [...] I **push myself** to do things that I **wouldn't have done before** because **now I've got more confidence** to do it.

Isabelle's perception of her body before the sports leadership course was tainted by the injuries she suffered, particularly in her knees and ankle. Leder (1990b) theorises that the healthy body is absent from our consciousness, as it does not require the individual's awareness to function. However, the pain experienced as a result of injury, such as those suffered by Isabelle, brought her body abruptly into her consciousness (Leder, 1990b). This *affective call* upon her body could have disrupted her identity, as an injury can be perceived as an *alien presence* (Leder, 1990b). Isabelle also noted how her injury was brought into her consciousness when she first started the sports leadership course, as she described how on "the first day I went I was just kind of like **oh I've hurt myself I'm not joining in**, [...] I thought oh no **I'm only going to be able to do 15 minutes**, I'm going to have to **keep going and sitting down**". The social gaze of others, and Isabelle's reflections upon the situation, again brought into consciousness her own *dys-eased* body (Leder, 1990b), leading her to question her ability to participate in the course.

However, once Isabelle began to participate with the sports leadership course, she found she was able to take part more than she originally thought, “I was actually **quite shocked** by **how much I could do, I didn’t realise when I was doing it**, but I was actually quite shocked by **how much my body can take**”. One reason for this could be that her *intentionality* was oriented towards participating in the physical tasks of the course, leading her to “forgot” about her injury and her body to become *recessive* once again (Leder, 1990b). In this way Isabelle’s body was present within her experience of the course, but it was absent of pain and from her consciousness (Leder, 1990b). As discussed by Leder, the absent body is that which is functional and perceived of as normal. The temporary forgetting of her pain while engaged in these tasks suggests Isabelle was in a *flow* state (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990), or even an *enfleshed* experience of *being in the zone* (Woodward, 2016), as her sense of embodiment and connection with the tasks on the course surpassed her awareness of her own injury and the feelings associated with being ‘injured’. During these experiences, her sense of *personal engagement* with the course may have led her to portray her *preferred self* (Kahn, 1990) to a greater extent than she had before; that is, a self which was able to contribute more physically to the course and was able to embody her learning. She seemed to be able to engage more physically than she thought she would be able to, and so a self which had confidence in her corporeal capabilities, and which perceived to be confident in experiencing the wider world through her *lived* body, was the self which she presented in her interviews after the course.

Jordan also hinted that her participation on the course had made her feel better about her body, and that she had “**lost weight** as well (laughs), I was **running around** a lot and **getting involved** [...] the **exercise** side of things from the course are **helping at home** as well, I’m **doing more at home** now. It’s good, I **feel better**”.

The loss of weight resulting from the physical activities of the sports leadership course seemed to alter Jordan's perception of her *body image*, which appeared to result in her expressing greater confidence in her *body schema*. Using Merleau-Ponty's (1986) understandings of these terms, *body image* refers to the individual's attitudes towards their body and how they are able to use it, whereas *body schema* refers to the individual's awareness of how they use their body within spatiotemporal movements. In essence, Jordan's loss of weight from the course and more positive perception of her *body image* and *body schema* appeared to provide her with greater confidence. This seemed to result in Jordan feeling abler in contributing to social settings outside of the sports leadership course (i.e. at home), particularly when it came to making use of her corporeality.

6.2.3 Embodied engagements with the course summary

For some interviewees, it seemed that the physical nature of the sports leadership course provided individuals not just with an opportunity to embody their learning, but also afforded them the chance to explore their embodied selves. The physical tasks on the course provided individuals with something that they could direct their bodily *intentionality* towards. Throughout these tasks, it seemed that certain course attendees could connect their *lived* bodily experiences to other aspects of their everyday lives, such as their home, family, or employment. Participation with the course could have brought to light their *situatedness*, or more specifically, a form of *bodily situatedness*, which involved a reflection of how they perceive their body use within their lives. This could have led to a stronger embodied sports leadership identity and greater confidence in their corporeal sense of self.

6.3 Summary of individuals' experiences chapter

This chapter has discussed the interviewees' key points of connection and disconnection between their sense of self and their sports leadership experiences.

The two main experiential accounts to emerge from the data appeared to centre around *social interactions* with various social actors, such as peers, new social groups, and the tutor, and *embodied engagements with the course*, which seemed to provide individuals with opportunities for embodied learning and identity exploration through using their bodies in new settings (for example, Myrtle's use of her body as a 'sports leader', rather than only as a 'mother'). These important moments, interactions, and instances from the interviewees' sports leadership experiences provide more personal accounts of how such courses are received by individuals than has been provided in the sport-for-development literature to date (as is discussed further in Chapter 8). The exploration of *how* individuals experience sports leadership courses not only uncovers how such courses are delivered by tutors and consequently reacted to by the course attendees, but also provides an indication as to *why* individuals might feel a connection with the course. The course attendees' depictions of their course experiences alluded not just to superficial feelings of satisfaction or fleeting competence from the course, but instead inferred deeper, more personal and *lived bodily* connections with their experiences. The potential of these deeper connections are explored further in the next chapter, which investigates individuals' descriptions of their *personal development*.

Chapter 7: Personal Development Experiences

Once they'd pushed me out of my boundaries I was like, oh, it's not too bad, I might as well stay here! (Isabelle)

This chapter builds upon Chapters 5 and 6, which explored the researcher's own reflections and the course attendees' experiences of the sports leadership courses. Specifically, this chapter focuses on the course attendees' discussions of personal development experiences, which may have been influenced by their participation on the sports leadership course. During the data analysis, there appeared to be aspects of the course that seemed to permeate the individuals' perceptions of their self and identity, which suggests that individuals might have been able to make connections with the course on a more personal level. These aspects were referred to numerous times during the individuals' interviews throughout the course of the ethnography (which lasted between 4-10 months, depending on each individual), which appeared to allude to longer-term influences of the course upon individuals' perception of self. The extent to which interviewees may have experienced personal development seemed to depend on the degree of *personal engagement*, *personal disengagement*, and *confidence* experienced throughout their course participation. These terms have been used throughout the results chapters so far to discuss certain elements of individuals' course experiences. However, further interrogation of how individuals experienced *personal engagement*, *personal disengagement*, and *confidence* aims to unearth individuals' experiences of personal development, and what personal development meant in relation to each individual's being-in-the-world. Therefore, this chapter discusses the extent to which the sport leadership course may, or may not, have engendered personal development in course attendees.

7.1 Personal engagement

In order for course attendees to experience some form of personal development, it appeared that they had to be able to make points of connections between certain aspects of the course and their own lives. These connections can be described as *personal engagements*. While participating on the sports leadership course, it can be argued from a symbolic interactionist perspective that individuals are performing roles which draw upon their selves (Goffman, 1959). During these performances, individuals may have experienced occasions when they perceived the role to align with their *preferred selves*, and when their “self-in-role” (Kahn, 1990, p. 692) was fully immersed in the moment. In relation to the sports leadership course these moments are discussed under the themes of *energy*, *challenge*, and *sense of purpose*.

I draw the terms *personal engagement* and *personal disengagement* (discussed in the results section 7.2) from Kahn’s (1990) exploration of how individuals connect or disconnect with certain roles at work. In essence, *engagement* or *disengagement* with a situation is posited as involving an individual’s investment of their self, or withdrawal of their self, depending on their interpretation of the context. Kahn (1990) argues that individuals’ interpretations of situations are mediated as a result of engaging with three questions regarding the scenario – “how meaningful is it for me to bring myself into this performance? How safe is it to do so? How available am I to do so?” (p. 703). To help make sense of individuals’ responses to these questions, Kahn (1990) draws from the symbolic interactionist influenced works of Goffman (1959; 1961b) and Hochschild (1979; 1983) to frame his psychological discussions within a sociological lens, as well as Csíkszentmihályi’s (1990) theory of flow and other phenomenologically-inspired works, all of which are congruent with my own

analysis. Therefore, my discussions of course attendees' "enlivened" or "deadened" role performances (Kahn, 1990, p. 717) during the sports leadership course also draws from such theory.

7.1.1 Energy

The sensation of *energy* was noted by around half the interviewees as being a key element of the sports leadership course which they could connect to. The energy they referred to seemed not to refer to the bio-physiological description of energy (i.e. burning fuel in the body to produce movement); rather, the interviewees' explication of energy appeared to be more subjective, emotional, and personal. The source of the energy came from different places for various course attendees. For instance, Isabelle described how working with children as part of the voluntary hours made her also feel energetic:

I enjoy being around kids, they're great, it's like you know **the amount of energy** they have, and they're all stupid and silly and running around, **you can feel and use that energy yourself**. And it's like I don't feel as immature around them as I do with other people around my age, **it's fun to be around them**. It's just fun, it's like **I can still do like sports** kind of stuff, erm with helping out, because I've done my sports leaders now.

Even though Isabelle was restricted in the amount of sport and physical activities she could participate in (and perhaps *because* she was limited in this regard), she noted how being able to organise sports sessions for children was important to her. She expressed enjoyment at being able to feel part of the sessions with the children, and seemed to identify with their playfulness and lack of self-consciousness while being "stupid and silly and running around". Similarly, Misbah experienced energy as a result of interacting with younger people while on the sports leadership course:

But you know it just gives you **that bit more** because there's so much **energy of youthfulness** that was around, and the young people were eager to learn, you know. It's about the **learning experience, they spur you on**. [...] and that youthful energy, it **gives you a belief** in what options are available, what settings you can work in, **you can adapt to any situation**. You can deal with adults, young people, elderly, able, disabled, there's a whole list of things and places that you can work with.

For Misbah, the “youthful energy” he encountered seemed to stimulate the “learning experience” for him, leading him to gain “belief” in the additional areas where he felt able to apply the skills he learnt. The energy he experienced appeared to provide motivation to engage with the course delivery, as it engendered his self-efficacy in interacting with a wider range of people and encouraged him to think about new potential situations in which he could work in. Both Isabelle and Misbah, therefore, seemed to express what Khan (1990) terms *emotional energy*, which he describes as influencing an individual's *psychological availability* when engaging with their experience. However, while Kahn (1990) discusses *emotional energy* in relation to situations of *personal disengagement* for individuals which involve Hochschild's (1983) notion of *emotional labor* (i.e. the individual is required to present emotions which do not reflect the emotions they are feeling, or “surface acting” [p. 33]), Isabelle and Misbah seemed to express *emotional energy* in more positive, *personally engaging* terms. They talked about connecting with their experiences because of the sense of energy which arose through interacting with others who were more physically active or younger than themselves.

These more positive accounts of *emotional energy* could indicate that Isabelle and Misbah were able to see a form of what Kahn (1990) terms as their *preferred self* in these others, and so connected with the idea that the course enabled them to see potential situations within which their *preferred self* could work. It could also be

argued that their connection with the course through emotional energy provides insight into the *backstage* regions of their lives (Goffman, 1959). Isabelle spoke about how she did not feel “immature” around children, and that typically she does sometimes feel immature in her interactions with “people my age”. Rather than having to engage with *impression management* behaviours (Goffman, 1959) which would conceal her perceived immaturity, instead she seemed to be more comfortable in expressing her *backstage* behaviours while engaging with the children during the course. This suggests that Isabelle felt less scrutinised by their social gaze (Goffman, 1959) than perhaps she typically feels when interacting with adults (or *front stage* [Goffman, 1959]), as well as less concern for the *feeling rules* which typically influence interactions with adults (Hochschild, 1979). Likewise, Misbah discussed how he felt encouraged by the sense of *emotional energy* he gained from interacting with younger people, and how it gave him “belief” and “that bit more” to engage with the “learning environment”. Both accounts suggest that the *emotional energy* both Misbah and Isabelle experienced was a vital source of *personal engagement* between their sense of self and the sports leadership course.

Myrtle also highlighted how her voluntary hours resulted in her feeling connected with the course due to the *energy* she experienced:

Doing that voluntary work on the Thursday with the disabled kids, just seeing their little faces just joining in any activity was absolutely amazing, and **I’ve never seen that before** and it was just like, I like this, **you get more of a thrill out of it** than you do working with normal children or normal adults, it’s a lot more...**rewarding**. You go home and you’re like, **you go home buzzing, absolutely buzzing**. I want to carry it on, keep going back and doing it so **I can feel that again**. If it weren’t for the course I wouldn’t be able to go back, so I’m really thankful for that.

In a manner akin to Isabelle and Misbah, Myrtle also seemed to *personally engage* with the sports leadership course through the affective connections she felt while participating. This might be understood through Myrtle's *lived body* (Merleau-Ponty, 1968), which encountered a new experience when volunteering with disabled children, resulting in Myrtle feeling a "thrill". Her consciousness could be described as directed towards a new experience which she perceived as "rewarding", leaving her with a desire to reengage with that experience in the future. Myrtle's description of being "absolutely buzzing" after volunteering indicates an experience which involved both *emotional* and *physical* engagement with the situation (Kahn, 1990). The sensation of "buzzing" infers that Myrtle's *embodied consciousness* (Merleau-Ponty, 1968) reflected on the meeting point between the cognitive, affective, and corporeal investments she made within the volunteering situation, which she perceived as "rewarding". The fact that Myrtle reflected on having a feeling of "buzzing" only once she returned home after volunteering might also indicate she experienced an enfleshed state of *being in the zone* (Woodward, 2016), or *flow* (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990). Both conceptions conceive that, following a deep engagement with a situation, the individual's return to attentiveness of the wider world involves a period of greater self-awareness and reflection on what has just occurred. Myrtle appeared to have reflected positively on her own *personal engagement* with the voluntary experience, leading her to want to continue doing it and a sense of *personal development*.

These findings would seem to show that *energy*, and in particular *emotional energy*, might indicate moments of *personal engagement* in ways that expand upon Kahn's (1990) depiction of *emotional energy* as leading to *personal disengagement*. The interviewees' points of connection between their sense of self and their volunteering experiences as part of the course are expressed in ways which suggest they could

invest emotionally into their tasks. This emotional investment into their corporeal actions seemed to lead to enjoyment, a desire to continue with these actions, and *personal development* to be experienced by the individuals. Merleau-Ponty's (1968) figure of the *chiasm* might be used to explain how the cognitive, affective, and corporeal elements of how the individuals' perceptions of their experiences led to personal development, as despite being described in divergent terms, the individuals' experiences through these elements were enmeshed. The use of terms such as "energy" and "buzzing" portray convergent experiences of individuals' cognitive, affective, and corporeal perceptions, which their consciousness appeared to ally with positive sensations, leading to interviewees' expressions of identity change through *personal engagement*.

7.1.2 Challenge

Another way in which the interviewees discussed how they engaged with the sports leadership course occurred when they referred to how much of a *challenge* they experienced during their participation. In pursuing their aim of gaining the qualification, the course attendees were required to perform and complete tasks to a standard which satisfied the tutors' interpretation of the assessment criteria, which for most interviewees required a concerted effort. For instance, Isabelle discussed how the course encouraged her to push herself:

Yeah I **push myself to do things that I wouldn't have done before** because now **I've got more confidence to do it**, erm just because of **the course itself made me push myself out of my boundaries** [...] it's like once **they'd pushed me out my boundaries** I was like oh it's not too bad, **I might as well just stay here!**

Isabelle's participation on the course seemed to entail a conscious exertion which led her to "push" and be "pushed" out of her "boundaries", indicating she experienced a feeling of personal *challenge* in completing the course. However, this

challenge provided a source of *personal engagement* for her which she discussed as influencing her everyday life too, possibly due to the sense of achievement she had in overcoming the challenges of the course. Myrtle also appeared to encounter a sense of *challenge* on the course, exclaiming “I was out of my **comfort zone** for most of the course [...] I was **stressing** a bit about some of the work, but when I spoke to James and Catherine about it **I was able to get my head around it** more and they said my plans and stuff were fine”. Carl also mentioned how the challenging aspects of the course helped convince him that it was worth his time participating on it, “**I’m glad** that the course that we’re doing has offered it to us. It’s been quite good, quite **challenging** at times, but it’s been good for me to **learn new things**”. Phoebe seemed to agree by saying “it were a bit boring at first, but actually when it got to the end of the week and **you were actually alright doing it all**, you think, **how did I manage to do that?** [...] It were **quite hard** actually”. These interviewees would appear to have found interest within the course through the challenging aspects it presented them with. In Kahn’s (1990) terms, these individuals experienced “psychological meaningfulness” (p.704) as a result of the “task characteristics” (p. 704) they were engaged with. The tasks constituting the sports leadership course would seem to have been interpreted by the participants as providing acceptable levels of challenge, instruction, variety, creativity, and autonomy (Kahn, 1990) for them to view it as meaningful in developing their sense of self, rather than being threatening or patronising to their sense of self by being too challenging or not challenging enough.

As well as the *task characteristics* of the course providing a point of connection for course attendees, Kahn (1990) also postulates that the *role characteristics* required to participate in situations can influence an individual’s *personal engagement*. *Role characteristics* refer to the (often implicit) identities required to be adopted in order

to participate with the situation, meaning that *personal engagement* or *disengagement* occurs through the individual's perception of how well the role characteristics fit with their perception of self (Kahn, 1990). When applied to the above quotes, it might be seen that the interviewees were required to assume 'sports leaders' identities which were different to other identities they had performed previously, hence the use of terms such as "pushed me out of my boundaries" and "out of my comfort zone". It would seem that these individuals were able to personally connect with these identities – or at least presented a sufficient sense of connection with the identities to pass the course (Graber, 1991) – which suggests that these individuals interpreted the 'sports leader' identity as being of value within their everyday lives. Therefore, the challenging roles encountered on the course potentially provided a source of *personal engagement* for some individuals, as the sense of *challenge* enabled individuals to develop their *preferred self* (Kahn, 1990). The emotional experiences of employing this *preferred self* during these challenging tasks seems to be linked to interviewees' experiences of *personal development*.

For those course attendees with a more established career path, the sports leadership course provided new challenges which seemed to help refine and update their skills. These interviewees expressed a stronger sense of self regarding their professional identities, as they had been engaged with their professions over a long time and were experienced at negotiating their self-in-role. Therefore, the sports leadership course and the challenges it presented were portrayed not as 'life changing' or revolutionising their *preferred self*, but more as a form of professional development within the confines of their present perceptions of their professional roles. For example, Misbah outlined how the course helped to broaden his view on his own practice:

It just **brushes up** and **teaches you something outside the box**. So sometimes if you go **tunnel vision** you just **go with what you know**, whereas **the course refreshes you** to say hang on why not try this, why not do this, so I was happy that. And it's just another skill set that you have really that you can rely upon, I would say it's **refining my own personal development and approach** really, yeah.

Similarly, Tahir also expressed feelings of renewing his professional identity by stating "it was very **refreshing** to me, and a **new challenge** for me. I know it's put me in a good, it's **good experience** for me, **which I could use**, definitely". Although unemployed at the time, Tahir had previously worked as a youth worker, which was Misbah's current role, and intimated that he was able to make links between the course and the job. Likewise, Daisy conveyed an understanding of how the course might fit into one of her career options when she said "like I've said already I'm a qualified coach and **could see how it fitted in with it**. I didn't think I wouldn't get anything from a level 2, but the erm, yeah **I did learn new things** and **it were harder than I thought it would be**". These comments suggest how the sports leadership course might be considered as a form of lifelong learning, as the interviewees appeared to actively synthesise the taught materials within their current understandings of what their job roles required (Alheit & Dausien, 2002; Doherty, 2009). By going on the sports leadership course, the participants demonstrated a willingness to take responsibility for their own personal and career development, which is becoming increasingly important to do in the modern fluctuating labour market (Alvesson *et al*, 2008; Edwards *et al*, 2002). The challenges presented on the course seem to be related by Misbah, Tahir, and Daisy to their career *possible selves* (Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2013), which reflected on their career aspirations and view of their employment status. For Daisy and Tahir, who were both seeking new employment and exploring their professional options, the sense of *challenge* from the course appeared to connect with their desire to present an identity which

was attractive to potential future employers. Misbah seemed to be interpret the *challenge* of the course as part of his own personal and career development to strengthen his feeling of professional identity as a youth worker. For these interviewees, the impression of *challenge* from the sports leadership course might be linked to their sense of self regarding their careers. The challenges they experienced might be interpreted as encouraging reflection from the interviewees about what they believe is necessary for their own personal and professional development.

In summation, the experience of *challenge* encountered by the interviewees while on the sports leadership course appeared to provide an opportunity for *personal development* by bringing *psychological meaningfulness* to their experiences (Kahn, 1990). Both the *task* and *role characteristics* necessitated by the course in order to achieve the qualification required the course attendees to adopt and present 'sports leaders' identities in which individuals seemed to link with their emotional experiences. The interviewees appeared to interpret their challenging experiences as useful for their future roles, both in personal and professional terms. Therefore, the *challenge* of the sports leadership course provided an opportunity for participants to *personally engage* with the course by enabling them to interpret a new 'sports leader' identity position in relation to their *preferred selves* (Kahn, 1990; Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2013), which seemed to result in some interviewees experiencing *personal development*.

7.1.3 Sense of purpose

In order to feel connected to the course, the participants had to bring their own meanings to the experience. For this to be possible, the course had to be relatable to the interviewees' identities by appealing to different aspects of their lives. For

some interviewees, such as Nick, an important aspect of the course which seemed to resonate with him was the *sense of purpose* it seemed to bring to his personal life, as well as his search for employment:

If you want something to happen you have to make it happen, you have to start from somewhere, that's what I think. Because **when you're born you can't even talk, so everyone starts somewhere**. Just keep pushing and trying and **one day I'll achieve what I want to achieve**, that's my goal now so **never give up what you want to do**. Because if I achieve that first step, then you're going to think, I did that, can I go a bit higher? So **that's part of my thinking now because of the course**. [...] **I know that I was doing something that counts for something**, and is a **qualification**, it will go on my C.V. and make my C.V. look good. And I did **learn new skills** and **meet new people**, so it was good.

As well as the new skills and qualification which were applicable to professional settings, Nick also seemed to garner a *sense of purpose* from the course which he was able to relate to his own sense of personal development. He referred to the course stimulating a personal drive within him to achieve his goals and the journey this might involve, as he reflected on how "everyone starts somewhere". Maurice also mentioned how the course made him think about the *purpose* of situations, and how he might be able to relate learning situations to his sense of self more in the future:

It has made me think **how I can learn better**, and **from different places**, you know? Because for some of it we were in a classroom all day but we were learning something all the time, do you know what I mean? I actually liked that, **it made sense, that did, to me**.

Sally also alluded to the importance of feeling a sense of *purpose* while on the course in order to feel *personally engaged* with it when she said "I thought it was pretty crap at the start. But then **when I had to start doing things** and **they**

explained why we were doing them, it got better like. It was pretty good at the end". The *sense of purpose* seemed important to participants, not just while on the course but also in applying it afterwards, as Misbah noted how he felt it was important to use the learning in wider life settings in order for it to mean something:

You can pass the course, do all the training, and then stack the certificate on the shelf in your living room and say once upon a time, yeah, and then say memories, we did a training course. Whereas this course had that transition and progress instantly, where **what you've learnt** which was fresh **has gone back into a place of work to help others**. I think **that was crucial in getting us to understand what it's all about**.

Misbah appeared to view the inclusion of the voluntary hours on the course as vital in translating what was taught during the course into practical settings, thereby sustaining its influence on individuals. Misbah highlighted how the course provided a greater *sense of purpose* to course attendees by providing them with the opportunity to demonstrate what they learnt in an applied setting. Individuals' *sense of purpose* might be understood in relation to Kahn's (1990) depiction of *psychological meaningfulness*, as being dependent upon the individual's perception of the return on their investment into a situation. By investing physical, emotional, and cognitive energies into situations, Kahn (1990) argues that individuals have a desire to see these energies result in something *meaningful*, either for their own circumstances or others'. From the quotes above, it can be seen that the interviewees were able to interpret different aspects of the course as being worthwhile for investing their energies in – for example the learning of new skills, the motivation to pursue personal goals, and the opportunity to engage with volunteering. The various *task* and *role characteristics* (Kahn, 1990) course attendees were required to interact with might be interpreted as affording individuals the time and space to reflect not only on their identities, but also on whether the

sports leadership course might be congruent with their sense of self. In other words, the individuals were able to consider how their *on-stage* performance might align with their *backstage* feelings and behaviours (Goffman, 1959). The *sense of purpose* individuals might have felt during the course could, therefore, be described as the link between the individual's sense of self and the aspects of the course which they relate to most strongly. This would expand upon Morris and colleagues' (2004) assertion that sport-for-development courses encourage change mainly through the fact that there is an activity at all for the individual to engage with, regardless of what that activity might be. However, I argue that the type of activity does matter, as the *task and role characteristics* (Kahn 1990) the individual experiences appear to need to link with the individual's sense of self in order for *personal engagement* and *personal development* to occur.

Another important facet for some participants in interpreting their course experience as *purposeful* was the encouragement they received from the tutor. As discussed in section 6.1.4, the relationship between some course attendees and the tutor appeared to reflect on the gendered *situatedness* of some individuals' experiences. In addition to this gendered experience, the same interviewees who expressed closeness to the tutor also seemed to gain a sense of encouragement and security while on the course. For instance, Myrtle discussed how Catherine (the tutor) was a source of reinforcement in continuing to pursue her new sense of self within volunteering opportunities:

So **anything that I can just get on to do to make the course even better for me** I'll just do it, and I said that to Catherine, she said I wasn't even going to ask you if you want to volunteer for that, **I was just going to put you straight on it**. She said because you just, **you just want to learn new stuff all the time**. [...] every time Catherine says

that we need a volunteer or we need volunteers she just knows I'm up for it, because I **want to use what I learnt.**

The trust and faith Myrtle interpreted Catherine to have in her appeared to be a key driver in her continuing to volunteer after the course. Isabelle also discussed how Catherine proved an influential figure in her course experience when she said “yeah Catherine was **dead important** when I first started the course, it's like literally **if she hadn't have been the one pushing me on to do that and showing how it can help me** I would've just **quit**, so, just because of confidence issues”. Daisy also expressed the positive effect Catherine had in enabling her to connect with the course by recalling “Catherine said when we observe you, you seem a bit ohhh, a bit wary, but when you get stuck in there you're brilliant, so I was like oh thanks. **That meant a lot to me** because it showed that **she believed I could do, could lead**”. These interviewees seem to be expressing what Kahn (1990) terms as *psychological safety*, which enabled them to *personally engage* with their experience. *Psychological safety* refers to an individual's comfort in performing their identity without fear of experiencing damaging repercussions, which in these cases appeared to have been elicited by the interviewees' *interpersonal relationship* with the tutor and Catherine's *management style and process* (Kahn, 1990). By voicing support and trust regarding the participants' abilities, Catherine fostered an atmosphere of security for these interviewees in exploring their identities through the sports leadership course. They seemed to feel able to perform new and different roles to which they might not have experienced before, as Catherine reassured them that it was necessary to try these roles in order to elicit their own *sense of purpose* from their sports leadership encounter. In effect, it can be argued that the interviewees perceived their own sports leadership identity through the identity expressed via Catherine's symbols, thus creating a *socially mediated* (Mead, 1927; Scott, 1995) sports leadership identity. The gendered *situatedness* of these

individuals' experiences may have further strengthened this bond, perhaps through a mutual recognition of their *intentionality* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) in combating a perceived patriarchal dominance (Allen-Collinson, 2011a; Fisher, 2000). Jordan alluded to the potential gendered influence upon her sports leadership experience when she noted that "I was expecting there to be more girls, there were only about five of us weren't there?", although she continued, "but I'm not bothered as I get on with everyone". However, by raising the question initially it could be suggested that the issue of gender influenced her expectations of the course experience. Myrtle also highlighted how her husband was reluctant to support her at times when she explained "if I need dropping off somewhere or picking up he'll try to do it, but if I need him to have the kids he'll put a right face on". However, none of the interviewees directly expressed a gendered dimension to their *personal engagement*, and this could be something which is followed up with further research.

Overall, the interviewees' *sense of purpose* seemed to be a key element in influencing their *personal engagement* with the sports leadership course. The *sense of purpose* individuals derived from the course provides insight into the meanings which individuals attributed to their experience. These meanings may have influenced the interviewees' construction of a sports leadership identity, which in turn influenced their interactions with the social world in other contexts (Craib, 2014). Each interviewee identified different aspects of the course which they connected with and the ways in which this influenced their performances in situations outside of the course context. The interviewees' *sense of purpose* can therefore provide indication into the areas in which they each experienced a sense of *personal development*.

7.1.4 Personal engagement summary

The interviewees' points of connection with the sports leadership course predominantly appeared to occur through three main guises - *energy*, *challenge*, and *sense of purpose*. By *personally engaging* with the sports leadership course, the interviewees invested their selves into new roles and identities which the course required they adopt in order to achieve the qualification. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, it is posited that the experiences of these new roles influenced individuals' interpretations of symbols and objects within their subsequent social interactions (Blumer, 1969). The interviewees' reflections on the aspects of the course which they *personally engaged* with indicated the elements of the roles they wished to embody. The emotional, cognitive, and corporeal dimensions of *energy*, *challenge* and *sense of purpose* were experienced through their *lived body* and interpreted through their *embodied consciousness* (Merleau-Ponty, 1968), leading some interviewees to express a shift in their perceptions of their identity. Thus, the course attendees who were influenced by the sports leadership course and experienced *personal development* did so through their own interpretation of *personal engagement* with the aspects of the course which most strongly resonated with their sense of self. While my discussions of *personal engagement* drew heavily from Kahn's (1990) descriptors of *personal engagement*, my findings further this work by forwarding the additional facets of *energy*, *challenge* and *sense of purpose* as influencing *personal development*. These elements can be seen as divergent from and converging with a number of Kahn's (1990) original themes, and furthers understanding in the different ways in which individuals make personal investments into situations.

7.2 Personal disengagement

As well as the more positively-oriented sensations of *personal engagement*, the course attendees' experiences of the sports leadership course and consequent feelings of personal development were also influenced by what might be termed as *personal disengagement*. This refers to feelings of withdrawal, disillusionment, and estrangement from individuals during moments on the course which they were not able to connect with on a personal level. As Kahn (1990) terms it, *personal disengagement* indicates a conscious effort from the individual in "uncoupling self from role" (p. 701) as a result of feeling alienated by what the role requires. Such an interpretation by the individual may result in a lack of personal investment into the situation and can manifest into a passive performance, which contrasts with the active involvement of an individual's self within moments of *personal engagement*. Some interviewees noted specific instances when they felt *personally disengaged* with the sports leadership course, which can be thematised under *lack of support* and *irrelevance*. The withdrawal and protection of the individual's self within moments of *personal disengagement*, and the influence this might have had upon their perception of *personal development*, is discussed next.

7.2.1 Lack of support

A perceived *lack of support* seemed to be experienced during the voluntary hours by most of the Pencey FE College cohort, with the only exception being Maurice, who volunteered at a different event. A sense of disillusionment was characterised by the interviewees portraying their experiences as estranging them from the course, which seemed to result in them disconnecting from those moments and reflecting upon these aspects of the course in a negative light. For instance, Carl discussed how he felt a *lack of support* from those who were running his voluntary session:

When the person who actually runs this thing says to you in the office “if it all goes to shit then it’s your fault because you’re running it all”, it’s like we’ve come here to run a football match and it’s just like saying it like that, **you know how much pressure that puts on someone**, for their first time? [...] And **the way that they spoke to me, I would not work for them, ever**. Calling me a “stupid cunt”? Yeah right. We’ve come here out of our own time on a day that we’re not even meant to be in, and he can talk to somebody like that? It’s not on. **I’m just glad that it’s over and done with**.

Carl portrayed his voluntary hours as being a *personally disengaging* experience due to his interactions with the organisers. The expectations placed on Carl appeared to be interpreted by him as being unrealistic, as well as being communicated to him in a manner perceived as offensive and inappropriate for the situation. There appears to have been a disparity between Carl’s expectations of the *task and role characteristics* required for the voluntary session and the expectations of the organisers, which suggests that Carl considered the situation to lack sufficient *psychological meaningfulness* for him to justify investing his energies into it (Kahn, 1990). The *organisational norms* and *management style* Carl encountered could also be said to have diminished his feeling of *psychological safety* within the situation, leading to him being wary of expressing his self (Kahn, 1990), and a sense of *lack of support* from the organisers.

The other attendees from the Pencey FE College course who attended the same volunteering session also seemed to experience similar sensations, and expressed sentiments of being underappreciated and unsupported. Sally noted how “**they made it sound like it was going to be really simple but it wasn’t**, and they called us stupid. Stupid c-u-n-t’s. I didn’t even know what I was doing really, **I felt clueless**”. Phoebe also described how “I felt as though we were **under pressure**, we didn’t even know what we were doing, **I was just stood there with a blank face**”.

like “what?”. The interviewees’ experiences of their voluntary session seemed to be negatively affected by their interactions with the organisers of the session, leading to a sense of *personal disengagement* and a withdrawal of the self from the situation (Kahn, 1990). Their interpretations of the organisers’ actions did not appear to correlate with their own perceptions of the social situation, possibly resulting in a breakdown of *symbolic mediation* (Mead, 1927; Blumer, 1969). Such a disparity in perceptions might help to explain why the interviewees emoted such disaffect at their experience.

Attendees from other courses also discussed how they experienced *personal disengagement* at times through a perceived *lack of support*. Isabelle felt as though there was a *lack of support* for her after the course to continue her volunteering work:

I’ve emailed them and I’ve phoned them and text them and **they’re not answering or replied to me**. Because the new guy turned round and said he’s got nothing to do with sports leaders. **He wouldn’t listen to me or give me any sports volunteering**. So I said who do I speak to and he said the manager, the top person, Lydia, so I have to speak to her if I want to do anything and **she’s hard to get hold of, if I email her she won’t email me back**, so yeah.

There seemed to be a frustration being displayed by Isabelle at the lack of volunteering opportunities she was able to participate in, despite making herself heard to gatekeepers and actively pursuing them. Isabelle’s *physical* and *emotional energies* could be interpreted as being denied, and her *psychological availability* being ignored, leading to a feeling of *personal disengagement* through a perceived *lack of support* (Kahn, 1990). Similarly, although she did not seem to directly experience *personal disengagement* through a social interaction, Myrtle was fearful of a *lack of support* when she found out she was pregnant:

I haven't told anyone from the volunteer agency yet because **I don't know what to say** to them! It's one of them things, **I'm worried, I don't know** if it's going to put things on hold or put things back, I don't know. [...] I'm just **nervous about telling people**. It's not come at a good time, it's because **I've been stressed out** and **my body just takes over itself** when I'm stressed and **does its own weird things**.

Myrtle's anxieties and anticipated *lack of support* might be understood as a reflection of her gendered *situatedness*, and could be linked to her interpretation of a perceived lack of understanding for the female experience of pregnancy. Her gendered *situatedness* may have influenced her *intentionality* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) towards volunteering, leading to doubts and concerns over her continued participation and a sense of *personal disengagement*. Both Myrtle and Isabelle seemed to perceive a *lack of support* following the completion of the course, which might suggest that the support structures for sustaining individual engagement in volunteering were not deemed adequate by the course attendees. This raises questions about the longer-term effectiveness of sports leadership and sport-for-development courses, and how additional feelings of support might influence participation in volunteering.

7.2.2 Irrelevance

Moments of *personal disengagement* during the delivery of the sports leadership course materials seemed to arise when individuals were unable to perceive the relevance of what was being delivered. Most notably, the interviewees from the Pencey FE College course questioned the worthiness of aspects of the course in terms of the relevance it had in contributing to their own development. For example, Sally appeared to disconnect from the course due to its mode of delivery, which led her to query what use the course might offer her in the future:

Making us finish that booklet, in the end, because **I didn't even know what I was doing**, I just took someone else's home and copied it. **But we didn't need it anyway so there was no point in it. I wasn't sure whether the course was like, had any point to it really**, because **it doesn't really go towards anything**. I've not really thought about the sports leaders course much since I've done it though, **I actually forgot about it** until I just saw you come in then!

Sally expressed her disregard at having to complete work she did not conceive as contributing to her own development. Others within this cohort also expressed sentiments of *personal disengagement* during the delivery of the course, with Phoebe stating "I just did the work book because it was **work that you had to do**. I thought **if it's not done I won't pass**. Some of the lessons were a bit boring, I don't see **what they had to do with anything really**, so I didn't really enjoy them". Maurice also discussed how he was disappointed that what was taught did not necessarily translate to what was assessed, which in turn did not reflect on what the qualification enabled him to do:

I didn't even know until the end, you're only qualified to assist someone who's teaching, so really like **most lessons didn't even, weren't even about what we can do**. Some lessons could easily be changed because **we didn't do anything to do with them lessons, nothing at all in the exam**.

These interviewees seemed to perceive parts of the course as being *irrelevant*. Their feelings of *personal disengagement* with the course seemed to be expressed through *studentship* behaviours (Graber, 1991). *Studentship* manifested through minimal engagement of the individuals' selves being invested into the course delivery, and surface approaches being taken in order to pass the course, with the least effort required being exerted. These behaviours may have occurred due to a disparity between the individuals' *preferred selves* and the roles required to be adopted throughout these parts of the course delivery (Kahn, 1990). The *task*

characteristics could be interpreted as not presenting sufficient *psychological meaningfulness* to the individuals, leading to the 'sports leaders' identity being viewed by the individuals as unattractive compared to their *preferred selves*. As such, the interviewees might be understood as having withdrawn their selves from these encounters and protected their identity through *studentship* (Graber, 1991) behaviours. They could also be described as employing *role distancing* (Goffman, 1961b) and *emotion work* (Hochschild, 1979) behaviours, as they seemed to want to distance their selves from the role of being a 'sports leader'. As such, "surface acting" (Hochschild, 1979, p. 558) seemed to be used in order to appease the tutor and achieve the qualification, before the individuals interpreted the role of 'sports leader' as being *irrelevant* to their *preferred selves* (Kahn, 1990), and thus was forgotten about or disregarded.

The voluntary experience also raised questions of relevancy amongst the Pencey FE College cohort, as they were unable to connect what they experienced during the delivery of the course with the requirements of their voluntary role. For instance, Carl was displeased with the experience as a whole, especially as it did not seem to connect with what was taught during the course delivery:

I can't really say that it was anything much to do with that, because with the CSLA course it was more like, you'd do like a warm up and like an active session where you were teaching somebody something or stretching muscle groups. **But with this you were just stood there** with a timing clock and **just shouting** "come here". **I don't feel that it was linked in at all. I don't feel like it was good enough.** We didn't get any breaks really either. It was freezing an' all.

There was a clear expression of dissonance being expressed by Carl, which seemed to stem from his perception of what the sports leadership course consisted of and the *task characteristics* his voluntary session demanded of him. The other

two interviewees who attended the same session appeared to experience similar discord with their voluntary hours, as Phoebe noted “**We were just stood there** for 2 and a half hours on the same spot watching all these games. **I think the qualifications a bit unfair** as we weren’t allowed to run the session by ourselves even with the qualification. **It was so cold**, my lips ended up turning blue by the end of the day”. Sally concurred when she exclaimed “**it didn’t seem to fit in with the course at all**. If we’d have done something **a bit more active** rather than **just being stood there** in the **freezing cold**. I ended up walking home with **cramp in my legs**. **I thought what am I doing with my life?**”.

The perceived lack of coherence between the sports leadership course delivery and the interviewees’ volunteering experiences seemed to render the voluntary hours as *irrelevant* to these individuals, as the *task and role characteristics* (Kahn, 1990) during this experience were not interpreted as correlating to those required for the course delivery. The *personal disengagement* these course attendees experienced might be further identified through their emphases on the sensory aspects during their voluntary hours. Their lack of investment into the situation may have aroused their consciousness regarding the sensations of their body, in a manner akin to Leder’s *dys-appearing body* (1990b). The individuals’ *lived bodies* seemed to move from being *absent* (which is described by Leder as being a healthy body, or *recessive*) to *ecstatic*, due to the *affective call* of the cold elements and aching efforts of standing in the same place. The *personal disengagement* experienced due to the perceived *irrelevance* of the *task and role characteristics* (Kahn, 1990) of the voluntary session could be described as enhancing individuals’ consciousness of their bodily *dysfunction* during this experience (Leder, 1990b). This sheds light on their perceived *dysfunction* of their sports leadership experience, as they express

sentiments of not enjoying the situation and viewing it as *irrelevant* to their own *personal development*.

7.2.3 Personal disengagement summary

The interviewees' expressions of *personal disengagement* during their sports leadership course experiences seemed to centre on two distinct feelings – a *lack of support* from organisers, and a perceived *irrelevance* of the tasks they had to participate in. During discussions of *personal disengagement*, the interviewees portrayed a sense of their identity being threatened by their subjective interpretations of their situation. This sense of disconnection from the course experience might be understood through a lack of clear communication from the course organisers, leading to a loss of *symbolic mediation* (Mead, 1927; Blumer, 1969) being established between individuals, resulting in unclear motives, confused goals, and an ambiguous perception of a sports leadership identity being rendered and interpreted by individuals. *Personal disengagement* might also be understood through the individuals' heightened consciousness during these moments, in a similar manner to Leder's (1990b) *dys-appearing body*. In contrast to the absence of consciousness during moments of intense engagement and *flow* (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990), or when the body is perceived as healthy and is *recessive* (Leder, 1990b), *personal disengagement* seemed to amplify the individual's sensory attunement to their world and their self, with feelings of "coldness" and "aching" brought into being by the *personally disengaged* individual. This finding appears to contribute to Kahn's (1990) descriptors of *personal disengagement*.

The majority of the *personal disengagement* experiences occurred on the Pencey FE College course, and seemed to centre around how the interviewees interpreted the way the course was delivered by the tutors and their voluntary experiences. One

reason for this might be because these course attendees already possessed a strong sense of their *possible selves* and career identities (Kahn, 1990; Nazar & Van der Heijden, 2013). As noted in Chapter 5, the sports leadership course was part of a UPS course oriented towards careers in the armed forces and public services, and so most participants exhibited clear views about their future career path. It might also be notable that this was the only cohort who did not specifically choose to participate with the sports leadership course; rather, their participation was enforced and intertwined with their UPS course progression. This absence of agency may have influenced the cohort's sense of engagement with the course, leading to a reactionary withdrawal of their selves from the experience.

7.3 Confidence

The interviewees' understandings of their *personal development* as a result of *personally engaging* and/or *disengaging* with the sports leadership course seemed to be expressed through their discussions of *confidence*. The disparate ways in which interviewees discussed their experiences of confidence as a result of their participation on the course appeared to influence their interpretations of their identities and sense of self. This indicated that a more personal account of confidence was prevalent than has been portrayed in the sport-for-development literature to date, and so warrants further interrogation from my thesis. As confidence is a complex and multifaceted term which varies in meaning across different disciplines, I establish my understanding of confidence as an aspect of identity through which individuals perceive themselves, in terms of how they view their self, collective identity, and identity as construed by others. This perception also considers how individuals felt able to effectively engage with others in their wider social world. My understanding of confidence is derived from the interviewees' discussions of confidence, which this chapter explores further.

Confidence is also relational, as it involves how people see themselves in relation to others; thus, confidence was a part of a socially mediated identity. Confidence played an important role in the individual's perception of the self, and how this self was presented as part of their identity within the social world. That each participant described confidence in their own way reflects the inimitable experiences of each participant's personal development. The participants' confidence might also be considered through their intentional acts (Merleau-Ponty, 1986), as the lived bodily experience of confidence provided the filter or frame regarding individuals' direction of their consciousness; this will be expanded upon in section 7.3.1. The notion of *reversibility* (Merleau-Ponty, 1968) and the "active and passive aspects of the human body as co-constitutive" (Morley, 2001, p. 78) also helps to describe the role of confidence as part of an individual's embodied identity, as it encompasses the reciprocal relationship between the individual's interiority and the social exteriority of confidence, both within the individual and within society; a notion which is built upon in section 7.3.2. Confidence not only has a bearing on how individuals see their selves within the social world, but it also influences how the social world views an individual's identity. How an individual presents their self through their identity in the social world is greatly affected by their confidence in many ways. My focus on the course attendees' experiences of the sports leadership course showed confidence to be one of the main themes, or *essences*, to emerge from the course in two main ways; confidence as a frame, and body-confidence.

7.3.1 Confidence as a frame

All the interviewees made frequent references to confidence when discussing their course experiences, which might be interpreted as the individuals perceiving their experiences to be *framed* by confidence. The use of confidence as a *frame* would

suggest that the interviewees were aware that they were *expected* to feel *confidence* as a result of participating in the course, as the majority of Sports Leaders UK and sport-for-development promotional materials consistently claim that their courses have such an effect (see appendix A). A *frame* can be understood as being the sense-making rules which an individual ascribes to a situation. My use of the term *frame* draws from Hochschild's (1979) depiction of "framing rules and feeling rules" (p. 566) when discussing *emotional management*. Hochschild herself drew from Goffman, who alluded to *framing devices* in his work on *presentation of the self* (1959) before expanding upon it in his book "frame analysis" (1974). However, Hochschild repositions the notion of *framing rules* as being enmeshed with *feeling rules*, thereby intertwining an individual's emotions with their interpretation of the social context. In essence, an individual's *frame* is influenced by their understanding of the social space they inhabit, the emotions they feel at that moment in time, and their interpretation of how they think they should feel within that specific situation (which can lead to what Hochschild terms "deep acting" [1979, p. 561]). I will now explain this further using examples from the interviewees.

Daisy discussed how she perceived confidence to be important not only for passing the sports leadership course, but also in pursuing future career opportunities:

Yeah **I wanted to get my confidence up** and to be able to like I said present to a full group, because I always thought **if I wanted to be like a teacher or a teaching assistant, you need the confidence** to be able to stand and present in front of people so, **that's what my aim was**.

Daisy suggested that she did not feel as though she had 'enough' confidence to be able to physically perform a role which she aspired to encompass within her identity. As such, she noted that her "aim" for the course was to gain confidence by adopting similar roles while on the course. Thus, it can be said that her consciousness, or

intentionality (Merleau-Ponty, 1986), on the course was directed towards gaining 'enough' confidence to feel comfortable in performing leadership tasks:

I think with my confidence again, **I did my sports leaders for my confidence**, because I wanted to be able to **demonstrate** and **stand up in a group of people** and say right we're going to do this and **take control**.

As Daisy's awareness of wanting to gain confidence appeared to be explicit, her actions on the course might be interpreted as an attempt to "work on" her emotions, as Hochschild (1979, p. 561) terms it. Her conscious effort to do "deep acting" in order for an "evocation" of confidence to be felt might indicate that Daisy perceived herself to be lacking an emotion which she believed to be required for her desired sense of self. Even after the course, Daisy seemed to continue to struggle with aligning her perception of confidence with her own affect:

They've already offered me some work if I want to do it, you know. **But my confidence is a bit, oooh god, I don't know whether to do it or not!** So at first I was a bit like oh **I can't do it** I can't do it, but the more I've thought about it the more I've thought **well just do it**, obviously they see potential in me so **I should really do it**, if they're offering it me. [...] I don't know, it's just **my confidence is a bit, iffy**.

Daisy depicted her confidence as being deficient, and unsuitable for either her preferred self or for the framing and feeling rules of her potential workplace. There appeared to be an incongruence between how Daisy *expected* to feel when undertaking the work offered, and how she *should* feel when comparing herself to how others appeared in similar roles. It could therefore be argued that Daisy's sense of confidence was the *frame* through which she perceived the relative success or failure of her sports leadership experience, and could have been the *frame* through which she interpreted her comfort in expressing her identity within a social setting. Much as Hochschild (1979) posits that *framing* and *feeling rules* are indicative of an

individual's ideological stance, it is possible to understand Daisy's expression of confidence as a *frame* through which she linked her sense of self with her interpretation of the rules of the social world, in particular regarding what was necessary to be *felt* within her choice of employment.

The apparent "emotional dissonance" (Hochschild, 1979, p. 565) experienced by Daisy also appeared to have been prevalent during discussions about the Pencey FE College voluntary experience. It seemed that the use of the term *confidence* was employed as a framing device by the interviewees in order to make sense of their disengaging experience, which has been noted throughout the results chapters. For instance, Sally stated that "**I think all I got out of it was confidence**, like because of having to shout out the team numbers and stuff, by the end of it **I didn't have a problem shouting** them out, **so it helped my confidence a bit**". Carl seemed to concur when he reflected on his volunteering experience, and said "I think that the only good thing, **I boosted my confidence a bit by working with new people**, because I don't really like meeting and talking to new people". Phoebe appeared to echo the thoughts of her peers:

It were good though in a way because when we first started you had to shout out the team numbers, you know ready for the next ones, after a bit you got used to it and it would sort of **boost up your confidence a bit**. So in a way **it did sort of boost your confidence up**, because I wouldn't shout anything, like we had to shout all of the teams and we wouldn't do it, but then after a bit it like, **sort of boosted your confidence so you could actually do it**.

Much like Daisy, these interviewees also expressed an awareness that they were 'supposed' to get confidence as a result of volunteering, and so their *frame of confidence* seemed to be informed by the prevalent sport-for-development rhetoric (see appendix A). However, these interviewees differed from Daisy, as they

appeared to use the rhetoric of confidence to mediate their experiences of *personal disengagement*. Hochschild's discussion of *emotional dissonance* (1979) might help in explaining this, as she posits that "the individual(s) compares and measures experience against an expectation often idealized" (p.565). In other words, the participants may have thought they *should* feel confidence as a result of their sports leadership experience, and so expressed a sentiment which adhered to the idealised expectation of the course and tutors. As such, these course attendees' *frame of confidence* consequently enabled them to employ studentship behaviours (Graber, 1991), which involved expressing a sense of confidence in order to deter any feelings of dissonance, and to possibly display a sense of progression on the course to their tutors.

As with Hochschild's (1979) notions of *framing* and *feeling rules*, my depiction of *confidence as a frame* reflects the individual's continuous negotiation between their fluctuating sense of self and changes in societal and cultural trends. Such changes in circumstances can require the individual to navigate new interpretations of what *should* be felt, which might lead to an adaptation of their own expectations and *framing rules* (Hochschild, 1979). Examples of this arose from my research, with Myrtle in particular demonstrating how her perception of the sports leadership experience may have altered her *frame of confidence*, and as a result her perception of her life circumstances:

I never thought that I'd get into anything like this, I just thought oh I'm just going to be not doing anything, just sat at home in a onesie with the kids all the time. **But since I've done the CSLA I've got something else to be doing now.** I think **I have changed my attitude**, like now I'll be sat there and thinking I want to do something. [...] I were going down the pan at home, I were. I were going into a slight depression stage where I didn't get dressed, I didn't want to leave the house, I didn't want to do

anything. But **I know where I want to go now, and I've got the confidence to do it now.**

Prior to the sports leadership course Myrtle seemed to view her identity almost solely in regards to being a mother. She credited her participation on the sports leadership course as stimulating a new sense of self regarding her “attitude”, and enabling her to decide “where I want to go now”. This could be construed as Myrtle’s involvement in the course altering her *frame of confidence* and leading to a change in her perception of self. The confidence she experienced from doing the course enabled her to recast her identity as encompassing a wider sense of purpose. Her negotiation between her sense of self and her life circumstances seemed to shift from being dominated by her interpretation of social conventions regarding motherhood towards a greater appreciation of her own feelings. Myrtle’s reformed *frame of confidence* could be said to have strengthened her sense of self and aroused greater comfort in expressing her identity within the social gaze.

A similar example might also be found from Isabelle, who’s *frame of confidence* seemed to elicit a change in her perception of self as being physically disadvantaged. She described the course as helping her to “**push myself to do things** that I wouldn’t have done before because **now I’ve got more confidence to do it**, [...] I’m much more upfront and **have more confidence to ask for stuff** erm rather than just taking a back seat like I used to”. Additionally, Nick’s *frame of confidence* seemed to alter his preconceptions about volunteering and interacting with disabled people when he discussed how “**I didn’t really want to volunteer** to be honest, I thought it was just rubbish, but **I’ve changed my attitude now** because I was there and I was having fun, fun with different people. **You make friends** with other people which is good and then **you get more confident**”. These examples demonstrate how the sports leadership course provided an opportunity for course

attendees to engage in activities which required an examination and negotiation of their sense of self. By choosing to engage with these tasks and invest aspects of their selves into the situations, these individuals appeared to experience *confidence* as a realignment of their selves in relation to others.

In positioning *confidence as a frame*, I draw from Hochschild's (1979) work on *emotion work*, *framing rules* and *feelings rules* in order to discuss how confidence is a reflection of both the individual's sense of self and their interpretation of the social rules at play. To understand further the interviewees' experiences of confidence, I utilised another element of Hochschild's (1979) work which discusses how *emotion work* includes "cognitive, bodily, and expressive techniques" (p. 562). A similar pattern emerged in my research, with expressions of confidence also appearing to consist of such techniques. While my discussion of *confidence as a frame* was more oriented towards the cognitive elements of emotion and confidence, the next section discusses more of the corporeal and expressive aspects of confidence which interviewees referred to, through the manifestation of *body-confidence*.

7.3.2 Body-confidence

In using the term *body-confidence*, I look to build upon what is more commonly known as an individual's *body image*, which relates to an individual's self-esteem regarding their perception of their visible body within the social gaze. I forward that *body-confidence* might also be understood as encompassing an individual's experiences of embodied confidence, and may also help to describe how an individual expresses confidence through their embodied identity. *Body-confidence* may be further understood as *confidence-through-the-body*, the corporeal manifestation, feeling, and enactment of one's confidence. If the body is understood

as the *lived body*, that is, the zero point of the subjective-objective and interior-exterior self-world relations (Merleau-Ponty, 1968), then *body-confidence* can be considered as the relation between the individual's self-perception of their physical performance and the enactment of their consciousness through their sentient body. I use this section to expand on my description of *body-confidence* further by using examples from my research.

One of the most apparent examples of how *body-confidence* arose during the sports leadership course can be taken from Isabelle, who had suffered from physical injuries for a number of years prior to the course. This seemed to be a source of distress for her, as the physical limitations imposed upon her body led to self-consciousness and self-doubt regarding her ability to perform her identity:

My confidence was well low after I had my operations and stuff, like I used to be dead bubbly and outgoing, and then I had my operations on my knees and it **knocked me like proper back**. Like it took me 2 years to start walking properly like without a limp, erm and because I was on crutches pretty much all the way through school they used to take, like **loads of people used to take the mick out of me**, like they used to nick my crutches and they used to really do my head in and it kind of proper, **it just kind of took all my confidence away**. I went proper, I went quiet, I didn't talk to anyone, **I stayed in myself**.

Isabelle's post-injury experiences can be understood through Leder's (1990b) account of the *dys-appearing body*. The *affective call* of Isabelle's bodily movements following her injuries induced self-reflection and isolation regarding her physical capabilities, and recast her body as an object of perception. Thus, Isabelle no longer "was" her body, instead she "had" a body which tempered the corporeity of Isabelle's identity (Leder, 1990b). This disruption of her being-in-the-world led her to view her body as being away "from itself" (Leder, 1990b, p. 87) and threatening to her mind-

body-world synergy. Additionally, the behaviours of others in taking “the mick out of” Isabelle further amplified her consciousness regarding her *dys-eased* body, which seemed to result in her being self-conscious about her body in relation to the “Other’s gaze” (Leder, 1990b, p. 93). Following her participation with the sports leadership course, however, Isabelle expressed a greater sense of comfort in using her material body, both during physical activities and within the social world:

When I did this it really helped, as it took me ages to, ages to build up a little bit of confidence again. **The leadership course has proper pushed me forward**, like I feel as though **I’m back to my old confidence self** but I’ve changed as a person, so yeah **back to normal confidence**. Because before I was, oh, I couldn’t even, I couldn’t even go in a shop and ask for something, I used to ask my friend to come in with me! And now I can just go up and ask people stuff and talk to them and help them out with stuff.

By returning back to her “old confidence self” and having “normal confidence” once again, Isabelle indicated a return to her “habitual world” (Leder, 1990b, p. 79). Her interpretation of her confidence appeared to reflect on her interpretation of her bodily abilities. Isabelle’s “old confidence self” clearly possessed a corporeal element which enabled her to physically embody her identity and perform her *body-confidence* within her social world. In this instance then, it seems that Isabelle’s *body-confidence* might be inversely proportionate to her body-consciousness, or bodily *absence* (Leder, 1990b) as her predominant recent experiences of bodily awareness have been blighted by painful injuries..

The interviewees’ experiences of *body-confidence* while on the sports leadership course might also be considered in terms of the *intercorporeal* experience they encountered. As Weiss (1999) notes, “To describe embodiment as intercorporeality is to emphasize that the experience of being embodied is never a private affair, but is always already mediated by our continual interactions with other human and

nonhuman bodies” (p. 5). Therefore, it can be argued that as the course encouraged social interactions and group learning, it is likely that an individual’s *body-confidence* was influenced not just by their own feelings, but also by the social elements of the course. I draw upon an example from my observation notes while on the Morningside Community Centre course to outline this:

Once James has set up the next activity, which is to show how a game such as tennis can be run so that it includes a large group, he asks for volunteers to help demonstrate what the activity involves. [...] Struggling for numbers, James has to resort to asking people directly to join in, and aims his gaze towards Tariq and his social group. “Could you help us out Tariq? We need a few more to make the game work really”. After taking a few moments to consider James’ request, Tariq agrees in a somewhat overly-positive manner “yeah of course I will, I was ace at tennis at school. Watch this lads, I’ll show you how it’s done!” As if Tariq has thrown bait at his friends by saying this, all four remaining members of the clique arise to volunteer their services too, with their audible claims of wanting to participate filling the room. “Go on then, I’ll play an’ all”, “Aye alright then, I’ll probably teach you a few things along the way”, “I’m gonna wipe the floor with you, you’ll be crying like Andy Murray when I’m finished with you!”

Despite an initial reluctance to participate, Tariq was encouraged by the tutor to engage with the activity on the course. Once he agreed to do so, his friends appeared to follow suit. The individuals seemed to draw confidence from Tariq’s acquiescence to participate and engage his body with the practices of the course. By diminishing the potential for feelings of isolation through engaging with the course, the course attendees may have felt abler to invest their embodied selves into the course through the support of others. This demonstrates how *body-confidence* might be considered as relational between individuals and influenced by others – in essence, *body-confidence* may be described as *intercorporeal*. The intersubjective experiences of each individual were located both within and between

their bodies rather than in isolation, which means that the sports leadership course might be described as the “physical hinge” of individuals’ *intercorporeal* experiences (Csordas, 2008, p. 111). This brings to mind Misbah’s quotes used in section 6.1.1 in which he depicted the cohort to be “**bouncing off each other**” and “Within that week it **brings and bonds people together**, because that’s how you will **learn from each other**”, as well as Nick’s assertion that “it’s **important to help each other**, sometimes it’s important to get help. So he’s helping me out, I’m helping him out. **We push each other** to do it, you know”. These quotes alluded to the social mediation and relationality of their experiences, *Body-confidence* might therefore be described as being experienced not just as an isolated individual, but also as something which is *intercorporeally* constructed and experienced through social interactions.

The *intercorporeal* experience also brings to mind Merleau-Ponty’s (1968) notion of *reversibility*. As Morley (2001) eloquently summarises, reversibility is “the relation between the body as it actively senses and the body as it is passively sensed by, the life around it” (p. 78). In the examples above the interwoven active and passive aspects of the course attendees’ bodies and consciousness’ is apparent. Their sensing of how others are performing using their bodies brings to the individual’s consciousness the use of their own body, which is mutually viewing and being viewed within the sports leadership course context. In essence, an individual’s *body-confidence* is reflective of their self-world relationship, as it entails the chiasm between their internal feelings and external portrayal to the outside world, as well as their interpretation of the interiority of their social world and their body’s external performance within it (Merleau-Ponty, 1968).

The use of the body during the sports leadership course has already been noted as being a crucial element of the course attendees' experiences. The opportunities for physical engagement and investment of individuals' embodied selves within the tasks of the course appeared to be key in not only piquing individuals' interests, but also as a vital element for individuals to feel a sense of *personal development* through their participation. However, it was not just the course activities which seemed to possess the potential to instil feelings of *body-confidence* within individuals, as the following vignette from the Sternwood Training Ground course exemplifies:

During the lunch break I get chatting to Phillip. [...] He describes Carmen as one of the most difficult people he has experienced working with, due to her behavioural issues. However, Phillip is full of praise for her, as she is one of the hardest workers on the course now, and demonstrates her commitment to the course by travelling the furthest out of any of the other participants to attend each day.

This example shows how Carmen invested bodily practices into her *personal development* outside of the course environment. Her travel to and from the course each day involved a commitment and investment of her corporeal self into attending the course. By using her body in this way, it could be argued that Carmen was establishing a *body-confidence* within the social world and her everyday life, even though her *intentionality* was only directed towards attending and participating with the sports leadership course. Catherine also noted how the Morningside Community Centre course was intentionally organised to replicate more formal settings in order to help the course attendees associate their bodies with similar routines:

We want to **get them into a routine**, gets them used to getting out of bed, having **something to commit to**. It was scheduled that way, because it was a training programme with not just the sports leader, we wanted to make it like a proper programme, not where you just come for one week and you've got a qualification. And

again **we knew we were working with people who were unemployed** and trying to get them **back on their feet**, so it was getting them used to a routine, that commitment.

The notion of attempting to persuade the course attendees to get “into a routine” highlights the rhythmical nature of bodily practice in everyday lives. By drawing from Merleau-Ponty (1968), previous studies have focused on how the *lived body* encounters ‘practice’ and ‘routine’ rhythmically, leading to the *lived body* becomes the site of habitual routines and the individuals experienced embodied-knowledge-in-practice (Blue, 2012; Csíkszentmihályi, 1997; Lefebvre, 2004). In essence, everyday life is a perpetually transforming and transformative space, and so the greater the individual’s investment into their own bodily practices and routines, the greater their sense of control of their own everyday life. This sense of control over their lives as a result of their physical engagement was noted by a number of the participants, such as Myrtle, who said “it **brought me out of my shell**, it were **getting me out of the house. It’s made me who I am** now, today, I wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing now. **I’d be a bum at home**, and I don’t want to be a bum at home”. Jordan appeared to echo these thoughts when she said “this was, like, **getting out there** and **getting involved. I’m actually surprised how much stuff I’m doing now**, the exercise side of things and **just having something to get up for** have really helped. Yeah, **it’s given me a lot of self-confidence**”. Tahir also noted how “time just seemed to fly by, that’s the kind of work you want, **you’re always doing something**. [...] Especially as it was a new challenge, a new, **something to work towards**. [...] I think it will help, maybe not straight away, but **hopefully it should help me find a job**”. *Body-confidence* therefore might be posited as the individual’s sense of control over the habitual use of their body, in a manner akin to *flow* (Csíkszentmihályi, 1990) or *enfleshed being in the zone* (Woodward, 2016) experiences. The individual’s greater sense of *body-confidence* seems to result in their consciousness being directed away from their body, despite

the overt use and engagement with their corporeity, thus leading to a greater embodied being-in-the-world.

My notion of *body-confidence*, or *confidence-through-the-body*, provides a new understanding as to how individuals might engage with sport-for-development courses, and how their embodied experiences through their *lived body* might influence their sense of self. The feeling of *personal development* experienced by the interviewees appeared to be greatly influenced by their corporeal investment into the course, as well as the *intercorporeal* investment of others into their sports leadership experiences. The concept of *body-confidence* therefore seems to reflect on the individual's consciousness of their physical performances within the social gaze, and their comfort in expressing their embodied sense of identity.

7.3.3 Confidence summary

Throughout my discussion of how participants experience confidence, I argue that there is an indelible link between confidence and individuals' identities. My exploration identifies how participants expressed the term confidence in two distinct, but interrelating, ways – as a *frame* and through *body-confidence*. Both of these depictions of confidence possess a relational aspect, which reflects on the strong influence individuals' interactions with others on the course had upon their *socially mediated* experiences. It is through confidence that participants describe how effectively they feel able to engage with other people, both on the course and in their everyday lives. Therefore, an important part of confidence is how individuals understand and assess their self in relation to others, and their comfort in performing their identity within their social world.

It seems clear that confidence is not just a process of internal reflection, but also includes other elements which pertain to an individual's sense of self, such as bodily and emotional experiences. The interviewees appeared to perceive their experiences through their *lived body*, as each touch, thought, sight, feeling, and sensation was understood through the individual's *intersubjective* and *intercorporeal* body (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). Much like Hochschild's (1979) depiction of *emotion work* consisting of "cognitive", "bodily" and "expressive" elements (p. 562), my positioning of confidence can also be seen to possess these cognitive, affective, and corporeal strands. As I understand the body to be the "zero point" of the lived experience (Morley, 2001, p. 75), the embodied sensation of confidence might be seen to reflect on the individual's perception of their lived bodily experience, and thus their intertwining mind-body-world relationship. Additionally, as Leder (1990b) notes, "the body is at once a biological organism, a ground of personal identity, and a social construct" (p. 99). Throughout this section, I argue that this can be applied to confidence, which provides further understanding into an individual's comfort of embodying their identity in their social world, and their embodied being-in-the-world.

My phenomenologically-inspired exploration of confidence contrasts with the typical portrayal of confidence in the sport-for-development literature, which seems to focus on the cognitive facet of confidence in relation to self-efficacy and decision making (e.g. Fraser-Thomas *et al*, 2005). Rather than confidence simply being 'increased', as is typically reported as being a common result of sport-for-development courses (e.g. Sports Leaders UK, 2012), I instead argue that confidence is a much more complex and individual conception of *personal development* than is currently portrayed by sport-for-development. Such a finding potentially has implications for the advertisement and delivery of sport-for-development courses, which I discuss further in Chapter 8.

7.4 Summary of personal development experiences chapter

This chapter has explored the interviewees' descriptions of their *personal development* experiences as a result of their participation with the sports leadership course. The main influences upon individuals' accounts of *personal development* emerged as being their experiences of *personal engagement*, *personal disengagement*, and *confidence* during and after the course. Each of these themes contain various aspects which linked the individuals' lived experiences of the course to their sense of self. The opportunity for the individuals to invest their selves within the tasks of the sports leadership course proved vital to their ability to personally connect with the course, leading to *personal engagement*, and the absence of which resulted in *personal disengagement*. These experiences were mediated by the individuals' sense of *confidence*, which referred not only to feelings of self-efficacy and competence, but also to their cognitive, emotional, and corporeal connections with the course. *Confidence* appeared to be the *frame* through which course attendees negotiated their socially mediated course experiences. *Confidence* also seemed to refer to individuals' comfort in expressing their embodied identity within their social world, leading to the term *body-confidence*.

These findings provide unique insight into the reasons why individuals participated with the sports leadership courses, as well as how the courses were experienced by individuals, and the influences of these experiences on individuals' identities. My findings build upon previous studies into sport-for-development, which to date have not considered the ways in which courses might influence individuals on a personal level, and have not utilised in-depth experiential data in the manner presented within this chapter. In the next, and final, chapter I discuss my findings in relation to the

current literature at greater length, and consider the implications of my research from multiple perspectives.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

Of course you have to do the assessment, you don't get a qualification for free! (Stanley
[Observation notes])

In this chapter I bring together the findings and consider them in relation to my original research questions posed in Chapter 1. Then, I discuss the contributions to knowledge my research has made and the implications these have within theoretical, methodological, and practical fields of sport-for-development. Also, I reflect upon my own journey (or personal development, perhaps) as a researcher throughout the PhD process, before considering the strengths and limitations of my study. I close this chapter and my thesis by considering how these findings might be disseminated, and consider possible future research directions.

8.1 Addressing the research questions

8.1.1 How can individuals' experiences of sports leadership courses and their relationship with the course content be understood?

The relationship between individuals and the sports leadership course might be best understood through their social interactions. The varying forms of interactions and actors who individuals encountered throughout their sports leadership experiences appeared to be highly influential upon their perceptions of the course content. As Scott (1995) argues, "the most important elements of the external world that actors must interpret are other people and their actions" (p. 102). Therefore, individuals' sports leadership experiences can be described as being *symbolically mediated* (Blumer, 1969) and *intercorporeally experienced* (Csordas, 2008), due to the reliance on social interactions to form a meaningful course experience for individuals. The *symbolic mediation* of the individuals' sports leadership experiences provides insight into "the collective or concerted actions of individuals

seeking to meet their life situations” (Blumer, 1969, p. 84). It seemed to be through the security of these social understandings that individuals felt able to invest their selves into the role of a ‘sports leader’ and engage their *lived bodies* with personal development experiences.

Another point worthy of consideration about how attendees experienced the sports leadership course is how the individual presentation of self during the course was made through *impression management* (Goffman, 1959). As the individuals were performing an inherently social role, there were moments of individuals attempting to present their selves in ways which they perceived to be appropriate for the situation. This was apparent during moments of disconnection with the course, such as when Carl, Phoebe, and Sally described their *studentship* behaviours (Graber, 1991) during the delivery of the course, as they perceived it to be *irrelevant* to their sense of self (see section 7.2.2). As such, they appeared to employ strategies to maintain *face* (Goffman, 1959) and achieve the qualification. For other course attendees, an absence of *studentship* behaviours (Graber, 1991) indicated they were not attempting to save *face* (Goffman, 1959). Isabelle and Misbah’s expressions of personal and emotional *energy* (see section 7.1.1) and Myrtle and Nick’s descriptions of the course as providing them with a *sense of purpose* (see section 7.1.3) might be understood as these individuals investing their selves into *becoming* (Hager & Hodkinson, 2009) a ‘sports leader’. This appeared to be further understood by their continued engagement with volunteering and sports-based employment after the course, most of which stemmed from attending the sports leadership course.

Furthermore, individuals’ sports leadership experiences can also be understood in relation to the individuals’ relations with the *material* aspects of the courses, as

discussed in Chapter 5. How individuals interact and bring meaning to the social *objects* (Blumer, 1969) of the course, such as the buildings and locations, also uncovers socially mediated influences upon their experiences. These aspects include the course organisers' reasons for running the course, the tutors' intentions, and Sports Leaders UK's purposes for providing the course. Overall, there were a number of social influences which constituted and converged on individuals' lived sports leadership experiences which require consideration when attempting to understand their relationship with the course.

8.1.2 How do individuals' varying levels of engagement with the course content influence how they might understand their identity?

The notions of *personal engagement* and *personal disengagement* as discussed by Kahn (1990) provided useful frameworks for discussing the course attendees' connections with the course, and how this may have influenced their identities. As discussed in the literature review, Kahn (1990) argues that individuals' "self-in-role" (p. 692) and task performances can be understood through the "presenting and absenting of their selves" (p. 694) during various moments of their experiences. In essence, the extent to which individuals invested or withdrew their selves from different situations provided insight into their sense of personal connection with the roles they performed. The instances of *personal engagement* from individuals on the course appeared to centre around feelings of personal and emotional *energy*, feeling *challenged* by the course content, and a *sense of purpose* regarding the tasks and experience as a whole. Individuals' *personal disengagement* seemed to be experienced when the individuals felt as though there was a *lack of support*, and when they perceived the tasks as being *irrelevant*. The amount and ways in which an individual felt either *personally engaged* or *disengaged* during the course

seemed to influence the extent to which they experienced *personal development* as a result of their participation with the sports leadership course.

The individuals' expressions of *personal engagement* or *disengagement* indicated their degrees of investment into what was being delivered during the course. Similar to the *impression management* behaviours (Goffman, 1959) discussed in section 8.1.1, the roles and tasks being presented during the course were met differently by course attendees depending on their interpretations of the roles and tasks in relation to their perception of self. The individual's negotiation of their "self-in-role" (Kahn, 1990, p. 692) seemed to be influenced by several factors, such as the individual's expectations of the role and their past experiences of similar roles. For example, the expectations of Sally, Carl, and Phoebe appeared not to have been met from their portrayals of their voluntary experiences on Pencey FE College course, which seemed to result in a withdrawal of their selves from the course experience and minimal influences upon their identities. Alternatively, the past experiences of Isabelle, Myrtle, and Daisy seemed to initially temper their involvement with the course, due to suffering physical injuries (Isabelle) and purporting a lack of confidence (Myrtle and Daisy). However, during their engagements with the roles and tasks of the course they appeared to make personal connections with their performances, seemingly leading to an investment of their selves into a 'sports leader' identity. As a result, all three individuals reported to feeling a sense of confidence in varying ways from their sports leadership participation. Thus, the *frame of confidence* through which identities were understood seemed to have been adjusted in a new way.

I, therefore, argue that the influence of a sports leadership or sport-for-development course on an individual's identity could be reliant upon the individual's own prior

expectations and personal investment of their self into their course experience. While the extent to which this is possible is dependent upon the roles available within the situation, which itself is *symbolically mediated* (as discussed in section 8.1.1), it is the individual who negotiates their “self-in-role” (Kahn, 1990, p. 692). The individual interprets their social world, the roles available to them in the situation, and the tasks which are required of them. As such, while the sports leadership courses provide individuals with an opportunity to invest in a ‘sports leader’ identity, participation in the course does not necessarily lead to the adoption of such an identity, and the individual’s interpretation of this identity is mediated by their own sense of self.

8.1.3 Why might individuals’ sports leadership experiences influence how they might make sense of their identity after participating with the course?

The main aspects of individuals’ sports leadership experiences which seemed to be recurring themes throughout the interviews were the opportunities for corporeal investment during the course and individuals’ feelings of confidence. These two aspects appeared to refer to the feelings of *personal development* individuals experienced through their participation in the course, and any resultant changes in their perceptions of their identity. It would seem therefore that a key aspect of the sports leadership course in stimulating feelings of development in individuals is the physical nature of it, and the opportunity it provides for individuals to engage their corporeal selves.

My focus on Merleau-Ponty’s (1968) conception of the *lived body* as the site of individual experience and perception brings to light the interrelations between individuals’ external corporeality and internal self-understandings. Rather than studying these in isolation through a Cartesian-dualism, the intertwining of

individuals' mind-body-world highlights the associated link between individuals' physical performances, social interactions, and sense of self experienced during a sports leadership course. One of the most prominent examples from my research is Isabelle, who prior to the course viewed her injured body as *dys-functional* (Leder, 1990b). During the course she was able to explore her mind-body-world linkage by employing her body in tasks which she appeared to perceive as being safe, as she seemed to feel as though she was away from a judgemental social gaze. As a result, she appeared to view her body as being more connected with both her external social world and her internal perception of self after the course. Isabelle's sense of control over her body seemed to return to her throughout the course, meaning that her body became more *recessive* (Leder, 1990b), and seemed to signal a greater sense of control over her performative self; or, as I argue, a greater sense of *body-confidence*. Nick provided another example, as he expressed greater comfort in interacting with disabled children through his corporeal experiences of "having fun and playing games" with them. This can be seen as an example of his investment in the course being intertwined with, and an expression of, his bodily *intentionality*, as consciousness is always conscious of something, and thus is intentionally directed towards something (Merleau-Ponty, 1986). By engaging in the physical activities and directing his consciousness towards "having fun and playing games", both for himself and with others, he seemed to develop a greater sense of *body-confidence*. As a result, he expressed less self-consciousness regarding his embodied interactions with others.

As such, I argue that the ways in which individuals viewed their sports leadership course experiences, and how they perceived them to influence their everyday lives, is through developing a greater sense of *confidence* in themselves. The ways in which the interviewees linked their feelings of the course to confidence suggests

that it was used as a *frame* through which their sense of self was viewed in relation to others. The way *confidence* appeared to be developed during the course was through the physical nature of the activities, which afforded individuals the chance to perform and explore their embodied identity through their corporeal investments in their learning. The course provided individuals with a relatively safe environment in which to do this away from the social gaze, and amongst others with a similar *intentionality*.

8.2 Contributions and implications of findings

8.2.1 Theoretical contributions and implications

The phenomenologically-inspired approach of my study contributes to the theoretical understanding of individuals' sport-for-development experiences, as such an approach has not been adopted to date. My exploration of individuals' *lived bodily* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986) experiences offers further exploration of the relationship between the personal feelings and sensations involved in a sports leadership experience, and individuals' bodies as a site for their own identity creation and development. The opportunity to embody the learning of sports leadership, both as an individual and through *inter-corporeal* practice, contributes new understandings of how sport-for-development courses can influence individuals' lives, and how lives can change through participation in lifelong learning as an aspect of being-in-the-world. My new mind-body-world understandings of *confidence* present a fresh perspective on making sense of individuals' experiences of *personal development*, and the opportunities sport-for-development courses provide individuals to invest their selves into embodied learning practices (which builds upon Zeitner *et al*, 2016). As such, when discussing effectiveness in sport-for-development (e.g. Coalter, 2013; Kay, 2009; Nicholls *et al*, 2010), I argue that the influence of courses is best understood through developing inter-corporeal

practices and the individuals' perceptions of their identity, which is typically expressed through *confidence*.

Previous research into sport-for-development has identified participants' social interactions between peers and tutors as being key in elucidating more sustainable impacts from personal development programmes (e.g. Peachey *et al*, 2011; Spaaij, 2012). These studies utilised Bourdieu's (1977) social capital theory to interpret their data, which identified how the development and utilisation of social networks (i.e. social capital) from these courses offered potential for personal development. However, the current literature has not explored the influence of these interactions, and any wider social interactions stemming from the courses, upon the participants' experiences from their perspective. Also, it has not considered the embodied experiences of these social interactions, and the *intercorporeality* of a sport-for-development course, despite the physical nature of these courses. As such, my study provides a new perspective on how individuals experience sport-for-development courses, both in terms of the social interactions which constitute it, and the influence of those interactions on the individual's sense of self.

Additionally, while sport has previously been described as a 'hook' in attracting participants for sport-for-development courses (e.g. Feinstein *et al*, 2005; Haudenhuyse *et al*, 2014; Scheerder *et al*, 2011), my findings indicate that the physical nature of sport-for-development courses actually play a much deeper role in individuals' experiences and opportunities for engagement. Rather than simply providing sport as a reward for attendance or as an arbitrary tool to deliver information, I argue that the physical activities of the sports leadership courses afford the opportunity for individuals to *perform* their learning, which can be invaluable for individuals who have been disaffected by formal learning institutions.

The potential for individuals' embodied explorations of identity could be considered as greater justification for including 'sport' in sport-for-development programmes, as opposed to the unsubstantiated belief in 'the power of sport'.

Further contributions to knowledge which arise from my thesis include additions to Kahn's (1990) typology of *personal engagement* and *disengagement*. While my themes of *personal and emotional energy*, *challenge*, *sense of purpose*, *lack of support*, and *irrelevance* overlap and relate to Kahn's (1990) original descriptions, they provide distinct moments of individuals' investments or withdrawals of their selves from situations. As such, I argue that these progress understandings of individuals' experiences of *personal engagement* and *disengagement*, and the ways in which individuals interpret their "self-in-role" (Kahn, 1990, p. 692). Additionally, I argue that my findings contribute to the wider literature on personal development, including lifelong learning, youth transitions, and career transitions. When discussing personal development, my findings indicate that individuals consider an experience as developing their sense of self when it engages their body, as the body is the "zero point" (Morley, 2001, p. 75) through which development is experienced. Individuals' expressions of confidence as both a *frame* and as *body-confidence* may also provide fruitful avenues to explore in these literatures.

8.2.2 Methodological contributions and implications

The use of ethnography in collecting my data presents a new way of exploring sport-for-development courses, as does my positioning of being somewhere in "the space between" (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 60); an insider and outsider to the field of research. I felt as though I was able to gain a more empathetic understanding of course attendees' sports leadership experiences by being there to witness it first hand, as well as contributing to that experience through both occasional

participations in activities and by being a social companion. By depicting my experiences of the data collection sites partially through a first-person narrative, I tried to evoke some of my own feelings and emotions as a researcher during the courses, as well as those of the course attendees. My reflections provide greater emotional, sensorial, and personal data than previous sport-for-development studies have portrayed to date. I reflect on my position as an ethnographer in the field of research more in Chapters 4 and 5, and reflect on the influence the thesis has had on my own identity in section 8.3.3.

8.2.3 Practical contributions and implications

As my study was part funded by Sports Leaders UK, one of the purposes of my thesis was to gain critical insight into their practices. As a result, there are four main recommendations which could be implemented by Sports Leaders UK and that relate more generally to sport-for-development practices.

- Greater consideration of the physical, environmental, and social contexts within which the course takes place. In Chapter 5 I highlighted the importance of the course setting, not just in terms of the physical location where it takes place, but also in terms of the social environment. As the courses encourage active engagement within the local community, more focus could be placed upon the opportunities and issues that exist within the area. Additionally, the history and use of the venues used should prompt deliberation regarding how it might impact the delivery of the course. For example, the use of Sternwood Training Ground leads to strong emotions from the participants regarding the use of football, in both a positive and negative manner.
- More specific focus during tutor training. There is significant importance placed upon the role of the tutor, in terms of delivering the course materials in a way that accounts for the social, environmental, and cultural context of the course

setting, and the participants. Chapter 5 shows the numerous responsibilities that constitute the role of the tutor, which vary greatly in scope and nature, and Chapters 6 and 7 make numerous references to the influential role they play in participants' experiences on the course. Yet each tutor interviewee did not feel that the tutor training process adequately prepares them for the role, which complements my previous work (Scott, 2011). Their pedagogies were developed mostly through their own experiences, with little assistance being afforded by Sports Leaders UK. Therefore, I propose an increase in the recognition of what is involved in being a sports leadership tutor, which could include discussions surrounding how to meet the diversity of participants' intentions, identifying behaviours which signify individuals' personal engagement or disengagement, and how they might encourage greater exploration of embodied learning.

- Further understanding of those who wish to participate in sport-for-development courses. It is important to identify the reasons as to why individuals wish to participate, not only for the individual's own personal development but also for the personal development of the cohort. Pre-course discussions with the tutors might provide useful indications as to the participants' expectations of the course, and how these compare with the course organisers' reasons for funding the course. This would help to ensure the participants' requirements are heard, and that the course is delivered in a way which retains the integrity of the qualification.
- Ensure greater care is used when making claims about the impact of sport-for-development course, in particular when using terms such as confidence. There is still insufficient critical research regarding the influences of participation in such courses to allow for widespread generalisations regarding positive impacts or increases in confidence. I recommend a more measured

approach is adopted which makes use of the growing body of critical literature instead.

The implementation of these recommendations could assist in keeping sport-for-development courses relevant within the modern day personal and social development world. A greater understanding of the individual processes, emotions, and experiences involved in a sport-for-development course enables course organisers to provide the opportunities and spaces required for participants to engage with their own development, as well as with others in their wider lives. The implementation of my findings through consultation with Sports Leaders UK could provide sport-for-development courses which have the potential to empower individuals through agency, confidence, and self-knowledge.

8.3 Reflections, limitations, and future directions

8.3.1 Strengths and limitations of the study

Section 4.5.2 suggests two modes of critical evaluation; Richardson's (2000) evaluation criteria for ethnographies, and the concept of 'truth as unconcealment' in phenomenologically-inspired research (Kerry & Armour, 2000; Ray, 1994). Both of these are concerned with the integrity of the research and the creative representations of the results. I address both through my interpretation of the research in an original manner by attempting to weave together my data sources, including my critical first person reflections and data from the participants, in order to form a comprehensible research narrative (Creswell, 2009). This work attempts to provide an original perspective on research phenomena and 'unconceal' participants' understandings of sport-for-development courses.

As is the case with any piece of research, my thesis is neither without fault nor without the complete answer. While I argue that I provide novel contributions to the sport-for-development and research fields, it is a researcher's folly not to view them as stimulants for further research. The main limitation to my study would be my own confusion regarding the approach I was taking at various points in the research phase. While I feel as though I have greater clarity regarding my phenomenologically-inspired approach now, during the planning and data collection phases I would have been less confident in stating so. As such, I believe certain aspects of my methods could have reflected my approach to a greater extent; for example, my interview questions could have been orientated more towards individuals' feelings during specific instances of personal engagement or disengagement on the course, or my observations might have focused more on the physical aspects of the course, rather than the safer approach of trying to capture everything within my notes. Although I acknowledge that my confusion may not have maximised my data collection efforts, I believe I still gained interesting and evocative data which support my findings and arguments.

All the research took place in one location of the Greater Manchester region. In order to examine the influence of different locations and environments upon sport-for-development delivery more closely, more comparisons between different regions, including national and international contexts, could provide further insight to support my findings. Additionally, different aspects of diversity, such as ethnicity, race, gender, disability, sexuality, social class, and economic exclusion could be explored in more depth, which I suggest in section 8.3.2. Although none of these factors are explicitly addressed as categories or social systems in my research, it does not mean they are not crucial systems in shaping experience.

While the number of data sources could be a limitation of this thesis, I argue that this small sample provided me with the opportunity to study participants in more depth and scrutinise data more closely. Also, although I believe the amount of time I allowed for thorough data collection, it was insufficient to classify my research as a 'longitudinal' study. Research which interacts with participants over an extended period of time, involving years as opposed to months, allows for greater exploration into the issues of lasting identity change and the long-term impacts of sport-for-development courses. In the future, I could follow up participants' development, which could provide this exploration longitudinally.

Finally, my phenomenologically-inspired approach provides an important alternative to the current sport-for-development literature by including participants' *lived bodily* experiences, and how they use their bodies in the learning process and negotiating social interactions. My approach sheds new light on the *essences* of participants' experiences and the influences of sport-for-development courses. The use of innovative methodologies and methods can further explorations and understandings of individuals' experiences in sport-for-development (e.g. Strachan & Davies, 2014).

8.3.2 Future research possibilities

While my research provides new insights into how participants experience sport-for-development courses, more critical research is required to examine how the use of sport in development programmes might afford opportunities for identity exploration and development. Although the corpus of literature in the area is growing, there is still not enough critical examination as to what role sport can play in personal and social development. In addition to this, I argue that the role of confidence in this process is worthy of further exploration. My new understanding shows that confidence is crucial in understanding how the impact of sport-for-development

courses relates to the participants' identity. Further exploration of how individuals experience confidence in different ways, in particular corporeal confidence, throughout sport-for-development courses provides greater understanding of the course impacts upon individuals' identities and wider lives. To further this suggestion, it would be beneficial to look at the influence of the tutors' social context upon their delivery of the course materials, how this could impact upon their relationship with the participants, and whether the aims and ethos of sport-for-development providers such as Sports Leaders UK transfer to different environmental contexts through the same tutor.

There are further possibilities of how this research could be developed. As I discuss in section 4.3.4, I initially planned to use Facebook as a data source, until the ethical implications of its use forced me to abandon it. Nonetheless, the use of social media in gaining insight into individual's social world has great potential, but due to the complexities involved, I believe it should play a central role within the data collection, rather than as a supplementary source. Another proposal which did not come to fruition was my proposed exploration of day leadership courses that take place across the United Kingdom, to gain national cross-contextual comparisons. However, I did not fully comprehend the amount of time and engagement that my immersion in the field of study would entail. Although my ethnography did lead me to abandon this additional facet to my study, my full engagement with the sports leadership courses did provide me with plenty of lessons in time management and planning that will stay with me in my future everyday life.

In section 7.1.3 I highlighted the *gendered* nature of some individuals' experiences, and suggested a shared understanding or *intentionality* might have arisen between some course attendees through a mutual recognition of their *gendered*

situatedness. This is one area of understanding which could be pursued in future research. Furthermore, as noted in section 8.3.1, additional signifiers of diversity such as ethnicity, race, sexuality, socio-economic status, and disability might be explored in greater depth, in terms of the influence they may have on individuals' *lived bodily* sport-for-development experiences. Such explorations could enrich the narratives and understandings of sport-for-development participation from more inclusive and/or excluded perspectives.

My own research intentions lie predominantly in attempting to publish my findings within peer-reviewed journals. Some of the findings represent intriguing possibilities which can be interrogated further; for instance, the embodied aspects of the sports leadership courses could have implications on wider areas such as physical literacy or embodied social interactions (Zeitner *et al*, 2016). A deeper Goffmanesque analysis of the social interactions of a sports leadership course may also bring to light further social processes which individuals experience and employ. Additionally, the more personal and emotional experiences of individuals' engagements with sport is a topic I feel passionate about, and would welcome the chance to develop this aspect of my study into further work and explorations. I have started disseminating my research through a journal article, conference presentations and a guest lecture (a full list can be found at the start of the thesis), and will consider presenting my findings to wider audiences through a blog, peer-reviewed articles in various journals, and through Sports Leaders UK's networks.

8.3.3 Personal reflections

As I began this thesis with a self-reflective piece about myself as a researcher in relation to my research topic, it is apt that I draw it to a close with reflections on how I view myself following the completion of my research. There is no doubting that I

have experienced a unique piece of research, and have learned to grow comfortable in viewing myself as an academic researcher. When immersed in the field of research, I believe it is impossible not to make human connections with those who you are researching. However, one vital skill I have come to recognise is reducing my own personal bias within the research, and to view the data as dispassionately as possible. While making connections with other people is only human nature, the integrity of the data and findings cannot be compromised.

My entry into this field of research was my first experience of being an ethnographer. Although I had briefly experienced being a researcher within participants' environments before, these experiences only entailed a brief exposure, both to the setting and the participants, when conducting one-off interviews for my previous projects. This ethnographic study was much grander than any research project I had undertaken before, and so there was a great deal of uncertainty and self-doubt involved in my decision making, both during planning and while in the field itself. Despite this, I felt as though I managed to maximise my ethnographic experience and gained a considerable amount of interesting data. Although my entry into the field during each course was accompanied with comprehensive nerves and insecurity on my part, upon reflection I struggle to see what actions I could have taken to have enhanced my data collection experiences. Perhaps with more experience comes greater self-efficacy and comfort with oneself, and so I feel emboldened and reassured as a result of this experience that I am capable of conducting acceptable ethnography.

The nature of my relationships with my various supervisors, and also now my research colleagues, has provided me valuable lessons, perhaps most importantly to have greater faith in my academic skills and vision. The irony of being one of the

least confident individuals arguing about confidence is not lost on me; however, through the trials and tribulations of my thesis I feel as though I have gained greater reassurance about my own research perspectives, even if these are not always well received by others. I hope this thesis is a greater reflection of me as a researcher and an individual. As my viva awaits, I draw comfort from the fact that this thesis *feels* representative of my researcher identity.

As a result of my various interactions during my research I now feel more confident when attempting to foster amiable relationships, not only in my subsequent research, but also in my professional and social encounters. The emergence of this reduced social anxiety in my personal life is something of a surprise to me, and may in part be due to my own (unforgiving) maturation. However, I cannot help but feel this is a consequence of having encountered such varying environments and social groups throughout my research, meaning it is an experience I will continue to reflect upon, quite possibly until my body's 'submission deadline'. By engaging with ethnography, I have found myself more frequently being able to cast a critical eye on situations. I seem to refrain from judgements and instead wish to inquire further in order to gain a holistic picture, in particular from different individuals' perspectives. The mysteries of individual experience and interpretation are ones which will be at the foreground of my thoughts for a long time yet.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Deconstructive discourse analysis of the Sports Leaders UK website

I began the research by conducting a Foucauldian deconstruction of the discourses that can be found on the Sports Leaders UK website, akin to that of Woodward's work on diversity and football club websites (2007). The content of the website is analysed, with general themes and a narrative being constructed through the analysis of the language and visual representations, or 'textual practices' (Farrell, 2000, p.20) used by Sports Leaders UK. After analysing the website two key themes emerge, which are 'becoming a socially desirable individual' and 'alternative strategies to teaching and learning'. I use these as the stimulus for discussion in each of the following sections, which also include contrasts and comparisons with other sport-for-development organisations in order to contextualise Sports Leaders UK within the sport-for-development world further.

The website produces a visual representation of the charity, provides a market stall for the customer to browse their products, and is an opportunity to recruit visitors into identities via an actively reciprocal process, although there may be restrictions on how much autonomy the visitors are able to exercise in this process (Woodward, 2007). The values, messages and identities presented to the reader of the website can be considered an extension of the 'transformative' and 'persistent' discourses (Farrell, 2000, p. 21) that are found during the taught aspect of the sports leadership course. The language used on the website provides insight into these discourses, as 'workplace' identities (or identities made possible by those utilising power, in this case Sports Leaders UK) are mediated and come into being through language (Farrell, 2000). This means that it is possible to gain an initial understanding of the

identities Sports Leaders UK make possible through their sports leadership training by examining their website.

It is important to consider the purpose of the website, as it can be seen to have a broad range of audiences. The predominant users of sport-for-development websites such as this are assumed to be those who are already participating with the course and those who are interested in engaging with the course. The selling of tutor training and sports leadership courses is crucial to the business model of Sports Leaders UK, as funding through these avenues enables them to provide grants and voluntary hours for social development projects. This is similar to other charities such as the Brathay Trust (Brathay Trust, 2012) which seeks to engage socially disaffected individuals with their local communities, although Sports Leaders UK focuses more on leadership training through the use of sport and physical activity. This is evidenced on the website in the How We Do It section:

Sports Leaders UK is a charity, funded primarily by the sales of its educational resources. It is now seeking to extend the reach of the awards and qualifications to the areas of greatest need through the creation of the Sports Leaders UK Foundation, to those we cannot reach through our traditional mainstream work. That Foundation will invest directly in community delivery of sports leadership, employing special project workers and sports leadership tutors to reach young people on the margins of our society.

It is also important to note this Foucauldian deconstructive discourse analysis takes place before commencing data collection (September 2012), meaning that it is the first contact I make with the sports leadership courses, which may also be the case for many course participants. The analysis and themes that arise from this deconstruction provide me with initial observation cues for when I am in the field, although I still adopt an open-ended and inductive approach.

Becoming a socially desirable individual

Throughout the sport-for-development literature the purpose for helping individuals to overcome social inequality is to not only improve the quality of life for the individuals, but also to enable them to contribute to wider society (Blackshaw & Long, 2005; Hartmann & Kwauk, 2011). This is typically done by removing perceived barriers that prevent individuals from realising their potential, such as improving their hard and soft skills and therefore increasing their employability. By gaining employment an individual will be able to contribute to the economy, by volunteering in the community an individual will be able to contribute to their local area, and by staying in education an individual will be able to contribute to academia and the economy at a higher level; all of these results are championed by sport-for-development programmes as the ideal outcome for the individual, as these form the political ideology of being the conventional pathways that sustain the economy and societal system. Sports Leaders UK is no different, in that these pathways are prominently billed as highly desirable goals for individuals to strive for through the discursive regimes that appear throughout their publicity material, including their website.

The homepage of the website is dominated by the language of the centrality of sports leadership training in attaining what is perceived to be socially desirable attributes by the political discourse of employability. The very first words that welcome the reader can be seen to be putting into discourse (Foucault, 1978), as they state that “Sports leadership provides a stepping stone to employment, further education and training”. There is consistent reference to what sports leadership training can provide an opening for, which encourages individuals to not only consider doing a sports leadership course, but also to think about what they can do after it.

There are also suggestions that Sports Leaders UK know how best to shape the individual, so that they are able to pursue further education or careers, with the language of employability being used repeatedly. The website declares that sports leadership training teaches “core skills” and “key life skills”, and their courses “match the requirements of all ages for sport, for education and for employment”. By determining what these key skills are, this positions Sports Leaders UK as the formal, knowledgeable power that the individual must succumb to in order to gain access to these core skills; a position that is typically at play in both formal learning and informal learning environments (Coffield 1999).

This language of employability is common throughout sport-for-development courses and their websites, with the Duke of Edinburgh (Duke of Edinburgh's Award, 2012) and ASDAN (ASDAN, 2012) also providing awards that are intended to enhance individuals' attributes and employability skills. Other sport-for-development sites such as the Prince's Trust (The Prince's Trust, 2012), Clubs for Young People (recently renamed “Ambition” – Ambition, 2012) and UK Youth (UK Youth, 2012) have programmes in place designed to encourage volunteering with the intention of developing the individual so that they can contribute to their community and provide services towards society. The reconstruction of individuals' current identity and the possibility of constructing an identity that leads in the direction of contributing positively towards society is produced through this discourse of employability. It is not only the most common discourse present on the Sports Leaders UK website, but is also prevalent throughout sport-for-development and lifelong learning texts, demonstrating the overlap of discourses between the two (Field, 2000).

Within the wider context of lifelong learning there is much debate surrounding its purpose and intentions toward individual development and sustaining the economy. Critics of lifelong learning have branded it as a form of social control that socialises individuals into the world of employment (Crowther, 2004). For some authors, participants are indoctrinated into routines of long hours, intense work, and increased delegation that are disguised by buzzwords such as ‘extra responsibility’, ‘empowerment’, and ‘flexibility’, which allows employers to take advantage and benefit economically (Coffield, 1999). However, an alternative perspective is that lifelong learning places an emphasis on self-reflection, self-development, and self-improvement, which encourages the individual to be reflexive on their education, career, and wider life (Lynch, 2008; Taylor, 2005). Both discourses are present across the Sports Leaders UK website, meaning that it is possible Sports Leaders UK is concerned with both building up the individual and providing society with a productive member; it is not necessarily a dichotomous matter.

The idea of enhancing the individual with skills is produced through language that describes what sports leadership training can and will do, with promises of increased “self-esteem”, “confidence”, “responsibility awareness”, “opportunities”, “recognition”, “empowerment”, “communication”, “self-respect”, “motivation”, and “core life skills”. However, the most common claim is that sports leadership training can change lives. It features prominently in each of the main sections of the website (Homepage, What We Do and Why, and What We Do sections) while offering minimal evidence. No definitions of what these ‘core life skills’ are, or evidence on how they are achieved is provided. All that can be found is anecdotal individual stories of people, and even then these are not foregrounded on any of the main sections of the website.

This is an example of the common discourse that can be found throughout sport-for-development courses, with hyperbolic claims being made in order to advertise their courses, despite there being a lack of trustworthy evidence (Coakley, 2011). This discourse also uses the language of exaggerated success that is constitutive of the discourses of sports commentary and sports marketing, with little regard for more complex issues such as injury and personal sacrifice. Similar sport-for-development and charity websites employ the same tactic of boasting about the number of people they have engaged with, usually on their homepage. For example, UK Youth describes itself as a “leading national youth development charity supporting over three quarters of a million people”. Ambition also states that “our members work with over 3,500 youth clubs and youth community projects across the UK, supporting more than 350,000 young people”. However, all that can be found in terms of evidence are case studies and stories pages that do not have links to them on the homepage. Independent critical research is needed in order to ascertain whether these claims are realistic as to what the courses can assist with. Until then, claims such as “Sports Leaders UK is changing lives”, and others regarding sports leadership training’s ability to produce socially desirable individuals can only be seen as unsubstantiated rhetoric.

A further discourse of lifelong learning that overlaps that of Sports Leaders UK is the link between formal, informal, and non-formal learning environments. As discussed in chapter 2, although there are always elements of formal, informal, and non-formal processes throughout learning (Billett, 2002; Colletta, 1996), it can be useful to identify the situations where one element is more prominent. According to Sports Leaders UK, in order to become a socially desirable individual, course participants are required not only to learn the skills mentioned previously through a mixture of formal classroom-based settings and non-formal practical sessions, but

also to use these skills through informal situations within their community and wider social context. Voluntary hours are a requirement for most of the awards and qualifications, and throughout the website great emphasis is placed upon individuals using the skills gained through the training within their local area. For example, “Sports Leaders UK awards and qualifications...establish and maintain activities that help people to play together and develop strong cohesive communities that thrive”. This quote demonstrates the main differentiation between traditional formal learning environments and the variety of learning environments afforded by lifelong learning, which encourages participants to directly act upon their learning within the relevant community in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Alheit & Dausien, 2002; Colletta, 1996).

A consistent connection between the sports leadership courses and their use within local areas and communities is made, such as “building the capacity for community based sport and physical activity opportunities through a network of Sports Leaders”, along with links to sections on the website and external websites that provide news of volunteering opportunities. For example, on the homepage there is a section where “learners can keep up to date (and) find volunteering opportunities”. The language also constructs the notion of individual responsibility in order to get the participants involved within their local community through the presentation of an ethical code and even guilt, for example:

Our work has therefore developed on the belief that the individual can and **should** make a contribution to their community (emphasis added).

Other quotes that allude to this discourse of community and individual responsibility include “trained sports leaders provide vital local volunteers to get people active in their communities”, “Sports Leaders UK was set up to support people across the UK

who would like to give back to their community”, and “this provides opportunities for young people to volunteer as a sports leader and take up a purposeful role within their community”. These examples show how Sports Leaders UK constructs a moral responsibility within the identities available which encourages individuals to contribute towards their communities and to society in general. The emphasis on community engagement echoes that of other educationally-orientated sport-for-development programmes, such as those associated with professional football clubs (Woodward, 2007). However, it does demonstrate a key difference between Sports Leaders UK and organisations such as the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, as the Sports Leaders UK website utilises the participatory and local community discourses rather than the self-challenge discourse that is apparent on the Duke of Edinburgh award website. The Sports Leaders UK website also uses the Althusserian (1971) concept of false consciousness, as the subject of sport is called into being through the process of being named, which the audience are able to easily identify with if they already actively engage with sport. By using the phrase “give back” Sports Leaders UK are assuming that individuals have a prior identification with the subject, in other words, have already ‘got something’ from sport. This Althusserian discourse is apparent on all of the other sport-for-development websites, as well as in the community development literature (e.g. Nadeau, 1999; Somerville, 2005).

Sport-for-development courses often use the construction of an agentic identity as a selling point for their programmes. This is linked to what Zukas and Malcolm (2002) identify as a ‘critical practitioner’ pedagogic identity within certain adult educators (p. 205). Educationally-orientated sport-for-development courses attract individuals disaffected by more traditional forms of learning through alternative pedagogies. These pedagogies adapt teaching practices and content in ways which

empower the learner within their own social and learning context (for more see Zukas & Malcolm's "dimensions of pedagogic identity", 2002, p. 211). Sports Leaders UK is no different, with agency being entwined within the discourse of the website through the use of language such as "responsibility awareness", "gain an idea of their own worth", and "provide them with recognition and a sense of self-worth not otherwise available to them". These quotes show that the discourse present on the website constructs the possibility of individual responsibility and empowerment within the audience's identity. However, the use of language that portrays a didactic discourse ensures the possibility that the identities constructed by the website succumb to an authoritative power. Examples of this can be seen through language such as "a willingness to volunteer", "take up a purposeful role", and "the individual can and should make a contribution to their community".

These discourses can also be found within the wider discourse of lifelong learning, with an agentic identity being made possible by a position of authority (Alheit & Dausien, 2002; Jarvis, 2001). Such a perspective constructs agency by guiding and supporting the individual through their own choices, and permit individuals to negotiate their own positions within the discourse of sports leadership. Individuals are given space within which they can critically reflect on the structures imposed on them within the identity that is being constructed, allowing them to work around the structures and even use them to their advantage (Rogers, 2006; Warren & Webb, 2007). Sports Leaders UK creates this possibility of individual agency on their website through the use of both authoritative and empowering language simultaneously. For example "central to the development of these courses was the need to support willing volunteers to feel better equipped and confident in supporting those clubs", "its range of awards and qualifications equips people with the skills and motivation to create and run sporting activities", and "a growing number of

courses are being delivered...this provides opportunities for young people to volunteer as a Sports Leader”. Therefore, this agentic identity alludes to Sports Leaders UK’s, and their tutors’, pedagogic practices on their courses.

Alternative strategies to formal teaching and learning

One of the most appealing features of sports leadership training, and sport-for-development programmes in general, is that it provides the opportunity for individuals to learn new skills in an environment that they enjoy, namely through the use of sport. As I discussed in the previous section, sports leadership training is consistent with other forms of lifelong learning in employing a mixture of formal, informal, and non-formal learning strategies in its training. Sports Leaders UK foregrounds this discourse of providing an alternative strategy to teaching and learning on its website, using it as a key selling point of their courses and presenting it as a fun, enjoyable, and effective way to learn. For example, “All of the awards and qualifications are practical – learners learn by doing rather than through written work”.

Promotion of the alternative strategies to teaching and learning discourse is not only done through the use of language, but also visually, with dominant pictures on the homepage showing both tutors and participants smiling and laughing, presenting the image of a harmonious relationship and reduced barrier between teacher-student relations. These kinds of pictures are common amongst the sport-for-development websites, with the Duke of Edinburgh and ASDAN websites showing trainers and learners in relaxed clothing, engaged in conversation, and smiling. The pictures also demonstrate the various awards and the activities that can be undertaken in order to learn sports leadership skills, such as dancing and outdoor activities. A learner identity is constructed that is intended to relate to the audience

and potential customers through the presentation of alternative strategies to formal teaching and learning, which is perpetuated by Sports Leaders UK's version of sports leadership training.

However, whether or not Sports Leaders UK actually provides an alternative approach to formal teaching and learning is debatable. Sfard (1998) argues that nearly all teaching and learning environments possess a mixture of both didactic and participatory methods, even in formal learning settings. Additionally, the pictures mentioned above show an authority figure present during their training, which is emphasised by equipment such as clipboards and whistles being employed by the senior presence. One picture in particular displays this, with a middle aged male standing in front of a group of youths who are dressed in a uniform and sitting in a semicircle. This picture replicates a stereotypical image of a teacher having authority over the learners, which constructs the identity of the obedient learner. In comparison, the Prince's Trust and Ambition websites do not have any obvious instances of adults leading other individuals, and illustrate a more participatory discourse.

Yet Sports Leaders UK still advertises an alternative approach to formal education, even though they do not explicitly state what their specific approach is. There are only allusions to their methods used in the taught aspect of their courses, such as "there are no exams – assessment is made upon a learner's ability to lead and demonstrate leadership skills for a certain period of time, within a specific setting". However, there are references to alternative environments that the learning takes place in, such as with the expedition training, and how the courses are "designed for use in a variety of different settings".

One reason why there is a promotion of the non-formal and informal learning environments available through sports leadership may be that Sports Leaders UK are attempting to reach out to those who have disengaged from formal education. There is an undertone throughout the website that a substantial proportion of their target audience consists of disaffected youths, who may view sports leadership training as a way of gaining a formal qualification through informal and non-formal pathways. An example of this can be seen on the first paragraph of the main descriptive page about Sports Leaders UK (What We Do and Why):

For some of the 150,000 who qualify each year, it is their first experience of responsibility; the first time they have been listened to, the first time they have gained an idea of their own worth, their personal skills and potential.

Other examples of the social inclusion discourse being present are provided throughout the website, such as “for many young people, a leadership role in short gives them recognition, a sense of self-worth and empowerment not otherwise available to them”, “(Sports Leaders UK) is now seeking to extend the reach of the awards and qualifications to the areas of greatest need”, “Over the last 27 years it has become clear that...through volunteering not only the community, but the individual can benefit...particularly those who have the least chances that society can offer”, and “sports leadership has been shown to help in the fight against crime, anti-social behaviour and drug abuse”. These quotes show that Sports Leaders UK places great faith in the use of sport as an educational tool in the reformation and development of individuals, which is a key aim for more traditional sport-for-development programmes (Coalter, 2010). This reformation is addressed by deploying experiential learning as a key pedagogical strategy by sport-for-development courses, which constructs different experiential learner identities

through their social inclusion discourses and pedagogical practices (Usher *et al*, 2002).

The experiential learner identity constructed by the Sports Leaders UK website alludes to a pedagogy which encourages learning through participation with group activities, both within the formal learning hours of the course and outside them via volunteering, with an emphasis on “creating who one might become” (Chappell *et al*, 2003, p. 23). However, it must be noted that there is no evidence on the website that any critical reflection processes are included in the learning process, which has been noted as crucial within experiential learning (e.g. Rogers, 2002). The Sports Leaders UK’s experiential learner identity can be compared with that which is constructed by the Prince’s Trust website, which also focuses on social cohesion and participation discourses through the discussion of individual attributes. However, they can both be contrasted with the Duke of Edinburgh award website, which focuses more on the individual physical challenge discourse in order to reform and build character, for example “a D of E programme is a real adventure from beginning to end”. This demonstrates the differences in discourses which occur throughout the educational initiatives of traditional sport-for-development providers.

An extension of Sports Leaders UK’s efforts to reach marginalised society through the use of alternative strategies to formal teaching and learning is alluded to through the use of pictures. Although the use of sports leadership training with diverse minorities is not stated explicitly via text, images of those considered being diverse minorities appear throughout the homepage and the descriptive sections of their website. Within the discourse of social inclusion, diversity is used to embrace race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, and economic exclusion (Woodward, 2007), though it is mainly race, ethnicity, and gender that is represented pictorially on the

website. The pictures are typically presented alongside language that discusses the versatility of the sports leadership awards, such as “a range of awards designed for use in a variety of different settings”, “a growing number of courses are delivered in prisons, young offending institutes, and a variety of local youth and community organisations”, and “employing special project workers and sports leadership tutors to reach young people on the margins of our society”. The pictures show some of the social groups that have traditionally been excluded from physical activity and sport, such as women and South-Asian youths, in an attempt to show that their alternative strategies to formal teaching and learning can be used as a form of inclusion.

However, it is worth noting that the pictures also reproduce certain stereotypes. Through two of the most prominent pictures on the homepage, the stereotype of the athletic black male is reinstated through a picture of a group of young black males playing basketball, and the stereotype of dancing being for women is created by a picture of a group consisting of only young women doing dance exercises. Both of these activities are generally attributed to the race and gender partaking in them, which thus does not constitute a sense of inclusion or barrier reduction, but instead restriction and pigeon-holing.

While this may be a misinterpretation of the pictures, it does highlight the fact that diversity is not a prominent issue within the language of the website. Minimal reference is made to race, ethnicity, gender, and disability, and no reference is made to sexuality or economic exclusion, which may have some impact on the delivery of the training. This can be contrasted with other sport-for-development websites, such as Ambition and UK Youth, which not only have a wide range of pictures displaying diverse groups interacting with others and with no stereotype signifiers, but also

include language that directly embraces diversity. For example, UK Youth ascertain that, “the project brings together young people from diverse backgrounds including young travellers, young parents, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning), young carers, those affected by domestic violence, young people in care, refugees and asylum seekers, young disabled people, those from BME (black and minority ethnic) backgrounds and young people marginalised from mainstream school”.

Summary of discourse analysis

My Foucauldian deconstruction of the Sports Leaders UK website has explored the identities that Sports Leaders UK make possible to individuals through their textual practices, such as the language and imagery deployed on their website (Farrell, 2000), which allude to their intended pedagogic practices during the sports leadership courses. As a result, I show how Sports Leaders UK draws heavily from discourses surrounding participatory teaching and learning, social inclusion, and community engagement. Sports Leaders UK’s representations of these discourses through their texts demonstrates the social relations and social identities that they wish to make possible to individuals (Fairclough, 1992), which relate to ‘becoming a socially desirable individual’ and ‘alternative strategies to formal teaching and learning’. While Sports Leaders UK hope that their website enables individuals to relate their ‘future selves’ (Stevenson & Clegg, 2011) to these identities and discourses, the process of identity renegotiation is a complicated and highly contingent procedure (Farrell, 2000), meaning that the sports leadership courses are not a simple process of individuals peregrinating to these new identities, as is revealed in my results chapters.

The comparison with other sport-for-development websites provides an interesting perspective as to how much Sports Leaders UK relies on their particular training method for their educational sport-for-development initiative, which is heavily influenced by experiential and participatory teaching and learning, as opposed to self-challenge or performance based coaching. This distinction is further highlighted by the amount of overlap that occurs with the wider lifelong learning discourse, showing that a self-directed learner identity is an important component of Sports Leaders UK's version of sports leadership training.

However, what is surprising to me is that there is no specific reference to what teaching and training methods are used on the courses, leaving the audience with an incomplete construction of this aspect of their learner identity. This may be a marketing strategy which is employed to leave the audience 'wanting more', meaning they have to sign onto the course to find out more. Another surprising absence from the website is the use of leadership language, with only vague management language being used instead. This deconstruction of the website provides me with some initial ideas to consider when I begin my observations, interviews, and additional document and artefact analysis. It also assists in helping to contextualise the participants' interviews, as it draws focus upon the competing discourses at play during their sport-for-development experience.

Appendix B: Sports Leaders UK level 2 award in community sports leadership learning outcomes

Unit 1 - Plan, lead and evaluate a sport/activity session (21 Guided Learning Hours, including 10 hours of community sports leadership)

Learning Outcome 1: Plan a sport/activity session.

Learning Outcome 2: Lead a series of sport/activity sessions.

Learning Outcome 3: Use appropriate communication methods when leading a sport/activity session.

Learning Outcome 4: Understand what feedback is and how to give it.

Learning Outcome 5: Evaluate a sport/activity session.

Unit 2 – Developing leadership skills (3 Guided Learning Hours)

Learning Outcome 1: Understand the skills, qualities and values that a leader will need.

Learning Outcome 2: Motivate participants.

Learning Outcome 3: Manage participant behaviour.

Unit 3 – Lead a session to improve fitness (5 Guided Learning Hours)

Learning Outcome 1: Understand components of fitness.

Learning Outcome 2: Plan, lead and evaluate a session designed to improve a specific fitness component.

Unit 4 – Adapting sports activities (4 Guided Learning Hours)

Learning Outcome 1: Understand how to adapt sport/activity sessions.

Learning Outcome 2: Adapt sports/activity sessions.

Unit 5 – Establish and maintain a safe sport/activity session (2 Guided Learning Hours)

Learning Outcome 1: Ensure that safety is planned into a sport/activity session.

Learning Outcome 2: Take action to ensure that a sport/activity session is safe.

Learning Outcome 3: Understand the emergency procedures of the current workplace.

Unit 6 – Organise and deliver a sports event or competition (4 Guided Learning Hours)

Learning Outcome 1: Understand the different types of event and competition.

Learning Outcome 2: Take part in the planning of an event or competition.

Learning Outcome 3: Assist in the leadership of an event or competition.

Learning Outcome 4: Evaluate an event or competition.

Unit 7 – Pathways in sport and recreation (3 Guided Learning Hours)

Learning Outcome 1: Know the provision of sport and recreation at a local, regional and national level.

Appendix C: Example of 1st person narrative observation notes

Pencey FE College: the first session

A rather brief and succinct introduction as to who I am and what I am doing there is provided to the students by Stanley, as I stumble into my seat and scan my surroundings. It begins to dawn on me that I know very little about the situation that I find myself in. What course is this? How does the sports leadership course fit into it? Why is everyone dressed the same, and so quiet? I slowly realise that I should have asked Stanley these questions during our meeting. Now that opportunity has gone I have to figure out these answers for myself, using only the clues that I pick up on from my seat.

The classroom is a continuation of the uninspiring 60s theme present throughout the rest of the building. I have sat on the 2nd of 2 rows of chairs which have a gap in the middle, right up against a brick-exposed wall that has been whitewashed. Various student-made posters about sports leadership adorn the walls which break up the monotonous white paint, with a few posters about fitness which have been sent from companies contributing to the frippery. There is a small window on the far wall which seems to have been designed to ration the amount of light permitted into the room, with the rest provided by 6 thin strip lights audibly droning overhead. While I take this all in, Stanley launches into his introductions as the session begins.

“Right then, shut up everyone so we can get started, we’re already starting late. Today you’re going to be starting your community sports leadership award. We’ve got a few slides to begin with which should explain what it’s all about, then we’ll talk about it more afterwards”. Stanley, along with Reece who is also present but as of yet has not said anything, assumes the persona of an army drill sergeant at the start

of the session, barking out orders to students who arrive late to take a seat and ordering everyone to stand up when another member of staff enters the room. The latter happens several times during the first half an hour of the session, and standing at their arrival seems to become a Pavlovian response by the students, so much so that I find myself beginning to stand to attention on a couple of occasions. Stanley breaks off momentarily from the PowerPoint slides to introduce me to the students, which consists of “this is Dave, he’s a PhD student studying sports leadership training and will be sat taking some notes throughout the week”.

During the PowerPoint slides I take the opportunity to look for further clues as to what course this group of students belong to. Everyone appears to be wearing the same kit or uniform, with black heavy duty boots, black cargo trousers, and either a black polo shirt or fleece with the college logo emblazoned upon it being worn by all the students. I finally catch sight of the register being held by Reece and see that it is for a Uniformed Public Services (UPS) course, causing segments of information from my meeting with Stanley to finally align and become coherent. The sports leadership course is taught as part of the UPS course, meaning that the students don’t necessarily choose to take part in it, although they are able to drop out of it by not turning up to college.

As the PowerPoint slides begin to come to an end the students’ yawns are stifled as the word ‘assessment’ appears in large lettering across the screen. “There will be an assessment on everything that you’ve learnt throughout the week on Friday, so you need to make sure that you pay attention to everything we do” explains Stanley. Most of the students shift uncomfortably in their seats, as one of them pleads “do we have to do the assessment Staff? What if we don’t pass it or can’t do it?” Stanley replies unanimously “of course you have to do the assessment, you don’t get a

qualification for free! You'll be able to retake it with another group if you don't pass it for whatever reason, but the assessment is also continuous throughout the week, so you have to show". I feel uneasy about the emphasis placed on the assessment and the forceful, almost threatening tone of voice used to describe it. I think back to the Sports Leaders UK website that portrays both the course and assessment as something that is more holistic, personal, and enjoyable than what has been presented so far. Perhaps this is simply the reality of a sports leadership course, or it may be a contextual issue, as a result of it being incorporated into a UPS course.

Instead of considering these possibilities more, I retune my thoughts back towards the present, just in time to hear Stanley regale the students about his sports leadership experience. "After breaking my back around 20 years ago now, I was offered the chance to do a sports leadership award. This then led me on to becoming a coach for a few years, and then onto becoming a college tutor in sports. It all started with this sports leadership award that you're going to be doing this week". This real life example of what a sports leadership award appears to have attracted the attention of more students, who have stopped looking down at their desks or out of the window with their hand propping up their head, and instead are listening intently to the real world implications of the award. Stanley continues, "this qualification will not only increase your career pathways once you've finished college, as you'll have an award in sport and can then go into coaching or sports development or whatever, but it will also increase your chances of getting into the armed forces. Those of you wanting to get into the army, the air force, the navy, these are the kinds of things they look for, keywords like sports, leadership, community. So whether you want a career in sport or not, this sports leadership course will help you once you leave college". Again, this information appears to have

been well received by the students, which suggests that a strong association with future careers is important to them.

Just as the students are beginning to take interest in what is being said, Reece uses it as an opportunity to swoop in and hand out a work book to each student. The booklet consists of over 40 pages and has the units for the sports leadership course decorating the front of it. Audible sighs are heard as Stanley informs them “you need to fill in your personal details for the work book, make sure you do it right because if you don’t fill it in correctly you won’t get your certificate at the end”. I ponder the importance of tangible rewards such as certificates as the students scribble in their details, before Reece interjects “That should only take you a couple of minutes. After you’ve done that, I want you to look at the units of the course and pick out 3 that interest you most. You should be interested in all of them of course, but just think about the 3 that you’re most interested in”. There are a few mumbles from the students to their neighbours, but for the large part they remain quiet, although I suspect it is through lethargy as opposed to concentration. Stanley suddenly asks “Carl, what 3 units have you picked?” Carl is clearly caught unawares and fumbles for an answer, “Erm...units? Well, I don’t know really Staff, erm, well...they all look good don’t they?” A few laughs emanate from the surrounding students, as Stanley looks unimpressed before asking another unwitting bystander “Phoebe, how about you, what units do you want to know more about?” A thoroughly uninterested look is followed by an equally unenthusiastic answer, “Erm, the last 3 probably. Yeah, the last 3”. Stanley looks veritably annoyed as he reminds them “come on you lot, this isn’t rocket science! We’re not covering anything new here, this is all stuff you’ve at least heard of before. All we’ll be doing on this course is incorporating skills that you already know”. This causes me to question whether I am in fact observing a sports leadership course, or in fact a typical UPS class at Pencey FE college.

Once the formalities of personal details are out of the way, Stanley begins the first exercise of listing the attributes of a good and bad sports leader. He moves over towards the whiteboard to write down the suggestions from the students. Now that he has given the students permission to speak, the atmosphere slowly begins to relax as more input is allowed. Each answer starts as one word and tentatively suggested by the students, but as Stanley begins to agree with what they say and provide colourful examples, the students are encouraged to interact a bit more. One of the examples Stanley describes about the attribute of 'adaptable' involves his own experience of running a sports session for 2 rival gangs in a local leisure centre, which prompts a series of laughter and comments from the students. They begin to engage with tutor a bit more and include some banter, with suggestions for bad attributes including "bad haircuts", "flashing", and "cross dressing", the latter of which prompts a discussion around transgender issues and equality. Stanley ends the task by pointing towards the list of good attributes and declaring "this shows that you know what you have to do to pass this course, it's a matter of having all of these skills in order to be a good sports leader". As I am left to consider whether a skills acquisition approach is appropriate for a sports leadership course, a video is put on from the Sports Leaders UK website which promotes the benefits of the qualification.

Once the video has ended, a new tutor comes into the room in order to take over for the next session. After the students suitably stand to attention to greet him and sit down, he asks Stanley what he has managed to cover with them so far. Stanley replies to the whole room rather than just to the new tutor, "what have we gone through today then? Somebody tell me one of the benefits of a sports leaders qualification". A few blank glances are exchanged between the students, before a volunteer hesitantly offers an answer of "erm...it helps you get a job". Stanley replies

“Good, it can help you broaden your career pathway. Someone else tell me another one”. Following another satisfactory answer, he continues with the interrogation. “Somebody tell me what unit 4 of the course is? Maurice, give me an attribute of a good sports leader? Sally, how are you going to be assessed on Friday?” Once he is satisfied that enough knowledge has been demonstrated, both he and Reece depart the room. Once again, I am left feeling somewhat bewildered by what has happened, as I confirm to myself that not entering into the armed forces as a career was a good decision.

Appendix D: Example of an interview guide

Interview Guide Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre Interview 1

- ❖ Find out about individual
 - Job?
 - How did they get into it?
 - Past experiences with sport?
 - Positive?
 - Negative?
 - Still involved?
- ❖ The sports leadership course
 - Why did they come on the course?
 - Expectations?
 - Does it link to job?
 - Does it link to career plans?
 - Experiences with similar courses?
 - How did they find out about this course?
- ❖ Experience of the course
 - How did they find it?
 - Was it worthwhile?
 - Did they get what they wanted out of it?
 - First impressions?
 - Positive/negative aspects?
 - Any significant moments?
 - How did they find the tutors?
 - Self reflections from the course?
- ❖ Future plans

- What do they intend to do next?
 - More courses?
 - More volunteering?
- How does course affect future career?
 - Helped/hinder them?
 - Altered thoughts about them?



David Scott - PhD Student – Sport and Fitness department, Faculty of Education and Language Studies.

Information about ‘Significance of Sports Leadership Training on Personal and Professional Development’.

My name is David Scott and I am a research student at the Open University. I am doing my PhD in the area of sports leadership training and the impact that this has on individuals.

I hope to collect data which shows how individuals experience sports leadership training, and what impact this course has on their lives. This will allow me to explore the importance of sports leadership training to peoples’ lives, how it fits in with other commitments, and ultimately whether it works in changing peoples’ lives for the better. This data will be collected through my own participation on sports leadership training courses and by conducting a series of one-to-one interviews with other people on these courses.

As a participant in this research, you will be asked to attend two interviews, the first interview being soon after the course has finished and the second interview currently planned for September 2013. The interviews will last for around 30 minutes, and will discuss the sports leadership training and how it fits within your life. There is also

the option to become a 'friend' with me on Facebook, which will allow me to see if and how sports leadership training is communicated in the social media, and for me to maintain email contact with you.

All information that is collected will be treated as confidential and will be used anonymously. No information will be passed on to anyone else unless there are implications for personal safety and/or wellbeing, and will only be used for my research. This study will follow the ethical guidelines set out by the British Educational Research Association (BERA), and will comply with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

If you do decide to participate, then you will be able to withdraw from participation at any time. Any data that you have provided me would also be destroyed and not used within my research project upon request, up until 31/09/2013. By participating in this study, you will be able to explore how sports leadership training fits into your life and how it can help you achieve your future goals.

If you are under the age of 18 and you wish to participate in this study, then information about the study will be sent to your parent or guardian. It is encouraged that you discuss your participation in the study with them, as they will have to give their consent to your participation too.

It is not anticipated that any risks shall arise from this research. If you or your parent/guardian have any questions about this research then please contact me, or alternatively my supervisor Ben Oakley by emailing b.oakley@open.ac.uk.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Kind regards,

David Scott

d.s.scott@open.ac.uk

01908 654396.

Appendix F: Participant consent form

David Scott

d.s.scott@open.ac.uk

Significance of Sports Leadership Training on Personal and Professional Development. (Participant Consent).

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research project which we are conducting in accordance with the British Educational Research Guidelines. Details of these can be found at: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/pdfs/ETHICA1.PDF>

Please read the following statements and sign at the bottom if you agree with them:

"I understand that I will be asked to participate in this study for 2 interviews up until September 2013. I understand that my participation will involve 2 interviews in total, and that the data from these will be analysed in conjunction with the researcher's own observations and reflections.

I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. I can ask questions at any time and can discuss any concerns with David Scott or his supervisors Mr Ben Oakley, Prof Kath Woodward, or Dr Christine Wise throughout the research process.

I understand that the information I give in the interviews will be used anonymously in this study and in any future publications, and that every effort will be made to ensure that comments cannot be attributed to me unless I give further consent for that association to be made.

I understand that if I say something that I do not want to be used in the study I can ask for it to be excluded. I also understand that I cannot request for my data to be destroyed after 31/09/2013.

"I _____ (NAME) consent to participate in the study of David Scott (Faculty of Education and Language Studies) with the supervision of Mr Ben Oakley (b.oakley@open.ac.uk), Prof Kath Woodward (k.woodward@open.ac.uk) and Dr Christine Wise (c.s.wise@open.ac.uk)"

Signed:

Email:

Date:

Appendix G: Descriptions of the course locations

12th – 16th November 2012, Pencey FE College: As the name suggests, the location for this course is a further education institute. The sports leadership course forms one week of the college timetable for students on the Level 2 Diploma in Uniformed Public Services course. It is delivered in a one-week block by seven regular college tutors, although there are two lead tutors who are responsible for its organisation and deployment. On the course I observe there are initially 19 course attendees, and all but one of them completes the course and achieves the qualification. The course delivery takes place on the college campus, with a mixture of classroom based lessons and practical sessions in the sports hall. The assessment on the final day involves the cohort splitting in half, with each group delivering a practical session to the other group made up of their peers. The voluntary hours are arranged on behalf of the students by the lead tutors.

14th February – 22nd March 2013, Morningside Community Centre: This course is organised by a charitable trust responsible for the arts and heritage, sport and development, and neighbourhood and communities of the council area. The course is free for unemployed people in the local area, and is delivered part time, two days a week for six weeks. 27 people attend the course to begin with, though this reduces to 18 people who completed the assessment, with 15 achieving the qualification. There are two tutors who deliver the course, with the majority of the delivery taking place in the sports hall of the leisure centre where the course is based, although there are occasional classroom and gym based sessions. The assessment involves the course participants splitting into three groups of six people, with each group delivering to a different local primary school group who come to the leisure centre. It is left to the individuals to organise their voluntary hours, although the charitable

trust run regular events which the course participants are encouraged to volunteer for.

15th – 18th April 2013, Sternwood Training Ground: The organisation of this course is different to the others, as it forms week number five of a twelve week Princes' Trust programme for socially vulnerable 16-25 year olds. The sports leadership course is delivered in a block over four days by one tutor, and takes place at a Premier League football club's former training ground. There are 7 course attendees who all complete the assessment and pass the qualification. The assessment involves the group going to a local primary school and delivering a P.E. session. The voluntary hours are included in the wider Princes' Trust programme.

28th May – 5th July 2013, Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre: This course is open to anyone over the age of 16 in the community. Attendees are required to pay, although the majority of them are in full time education or on job seekers allowance, and so have the fee paid for by the local charitable trust. It is the same charitable trust that organise the Morningside Community Centre course, and includes the same two tutors who delivered that course, although this course is based in a different sports hall and involves different participants. There are 13 people who start the course, although one person has to withdraw after the first day after injuring his hamstring, and so 12 people complete the assessment and achieve the qualification. Although the course is delivered in a block over one week, the assessment takes place a week later as it forms part of a primary school's summer sports programme, and involves the cohort delivering a day's worth of activities to the children. The individuals have to arrange their own subsequent voluntary hours.

Appendix H: Participants and interview details

Name	Role	Course	Age	Gender	Ethnicity	Number of Interviews	Dates From First to Last Interview
Carl	Course Participant	Pencey FE College	20	Male	White British	4	16/11/12 - 18/10/13
Maurice	Course Participant	Pencey FE College	18	Male	White British	2	22/11/12 - 09/05/13
Phoebe	Course Participant	Pencey FE College	16	Female	White British	4	22/11/12 - 18/10/13
Sally	Course Participant	Pencey FE College	16	Female	White British	3	22/11/12 - 09/05/13
Daisy	Course Participant	Morningside Community Centre	24	Female	White British	3	26/03/13 - 04/10/13
Jordan	Course Participant	Morningside Community Centre	24	Female	Pakistani British	3	22/03/13 - 03/10/13
Myrtle	Course Participant	Morningside Community Centre	33	Female	White British	3	26/03/13 - 10/10/13
Nick	Course Participant	Morningside Community Centre	22	Male	Black British	3	12/04/13 - 17/10/13
Tahir	Course Participant	Morningside Community Centre	31	Male	Pakistani British	3	21/03/13 - 17/10/13
Isabelle	Course Participant	Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre	19	Female	White British	2	18/07/13 - 08/11/13
Misbah	Course Participant	Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre	35	Male	Pakistani British	2	16/07/13 - 22/10/13
Gail	Tutor	Pencey FE College	42	Female	White British	1	16/05/13
Stanley	Tutor	Pencey FE College	39	Male	White British	1	16/05/13
Catherine	Tutor	Morningside Community Centre and Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre	27	Female	Black British	1	15/07/13
James	Tutor	Morningside Community Centre and Hawthorne Ridge Community Centre	34	Male	White British	1	15/07/13

Phillip	Tutor	Sternwood Training Ground	59	Male	White British	1	09/07/13
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Appendix I: Comparison of contextual data across regions

Table 1: Economic activity and unemployment across regions

	Economically Active (%)	Economically Inactive (%)	Unemployed (%)	Age 16-24 Unemployment (%)	Long Term (over 2 years) Unemployed (%)
England	69.9	30.1	7.1	1.2	1.7
Greater Manchester	67.8	32.2	9.5	1.4	1.8
Hillside Borough	66.1	33.9	12.0	1.8	2.3
Municipal Borough	68.3	31.7	10.5	1.5	2.1

Table 2: Qualification attainment across regions

	Pupils achieving 5+ A*-C Grades at GCSE Level or Equivalent, including English and Mathematics (%)	Other Vocational or Work Related Qualifications (%)
England	58.8	17.0
Greater Manchester	58.9	16.9
Hillside Borough	53.4	15.7
Municipal Borough	54.5	14.9

Table 3: Area of green space in each region

	Total Area of all Land Types (m2)	Area of Green Space (m2)	Area of Green Space (%)
England	132,323,721.60	115,741,625.40	87.5
Greater Manchester	14,850,301.11	12,310,064.92	82.9
Hillside Borough	158,436.53	114,770.42	72.4
Municipal Borough	97,006.99	53,998.47	55.7

Appendix J: Super output data for Hillside and Municipa areas

Hillside

Population and housing

	Total Residents	Density (Number of Persons per Hectare)	Households who Owned Accommodation Outright or Through Mortgage or Loan (%)
Area A	12,440	41.7	34.8
Area B	9,280	3.5	74.8

	Detached Whole Houses or Bungalows (% of Total Households)	Semi Detached Whole Houses or Bungalows (%)	Terraced Houses Including End Terrace (%)	Flat, Maisonette, or Apartment as part of Purpose Built Block of Flats or Tenement (%)
Area A	3.6	15.2	37.3	40.6
Area B	15.8	33.0	42.4	5.9

Economic Activity

	Economically Active – Full Time, Part Time, and Self Employed (% Population Aged 16-74)	Economically Active – Unemployed (%)	Unemployed – Never Worked (%)	Long Term Unemployed (%)
Area A	44.2	10.2	2.5	3.9
Area B	63.1	4.4	0.6	1.5

Ethnicity

	White – British, Irish, and Other (% Population)	Mixed and Multi-Ethnic Groups (%)	Asian – Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, and Other (%)	Black – African, Caribbean, and Other (%)
Area A	49.2	3.1	41.7	4.3
Area B	97.8	1.0	1.0	0.2

Occupation

	Manag erial/S enior Officia l (% Popul ation Aged 16-74))	Profe ssion al (%)	Associ ate Profess ional and Techni cal (%)	Admin istrativ e and Secret arial (%)	Skill ed Trad e (%)	Carin g, Leisur e, and servic e (%)	Sale s and Cust omer Servi ce (%)	Process, Plant, and Machine Operativ e (%)	Elemen tary (%)
Area A	5.7	10.3	6.8	8.0	10.6	11.1	12.1	15.1	20.4
Area B	10.2	18.5	12.3	11.9	12.3	11.1	6.3	9.3	8.0

School Results and Highest Level of Qualifications

	Over 16's with 5 or more GCSE grade A*-C or Equivalent (%)	No Formal Qualificat ions (%)	Level 1 (%)	Level 2 (%)	Apprentice ship (%)	Level 3 (%)	Level 4 (%)	Othe r (%)
Area A	14.1	36.3	14.5	14.1	2.2	8.4	14.4	10.1
Area B	15.8	23.9	13.1	15.8	4.6	12.9	25.9	3.9

Green Space

	Total Area of all Land Types (m ²)	Total Area of Green Space (m ²)	Area of Green Space (%)
Area A	2,449.08	614.89	25.1
Area B	25,551.78	22,178.62	86.8

Municipa

Population and Housing

	Total Residents	Density (Number of Persons per Hectare)	Households who Owned Accommodation Outright or Through Mortgage or Loan (%)
Area A	12,935	51.5	26.4
Area B	10,035	14.4	85.7

	Detached Whole Houses or Bungalows (% of Total Households)	Semi Detached Whole Houses or Bungalows (%)	Terraced Houses Including End Terrace (%)	Flat, Maisonette, or Apartment as part of Purpose Built Block of Flats or Tenement (%)
Area A	3.3	12.9	37.8	42.4
Area B	24.4	53.3	13.4	7.5

Economic Activity

	Economically Active – Full Time, Part Time, and Self Employed (% Population Aged 16-74)	Economically Active – Unemployed (%)	Unemployed – Never Worked (%)	Long Term Unemployed (%)
Area A	46.0	7.5	1.4	2.8
Area B	68.7	2.3	0.2	0.8

Ethnicity

	White – British, Irish, and Other (% Population)	Mixed and Multi-Ethnic Groups (%)	Asian – Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, and Other (%)	Black – African, Caribbean, and Other (%)
Area A	85.5	2.5	4.8	5.9
Area B	95.3	1.3	2.7	0.2

Occupation

	Manag erial/Senior Official (% Population Aged 16-74))	Profes sional (%)	Associat e Professi onal and Technic al (%)	Administ rative and Secretari al (%)	Skil led Tra de (%)	Cari ng, Leis ure, and serv ice (%)	Sales and Custo mer Servi ce (%)	Proce ss, Plant, and Mach ine Oper ative (%)	Elem entar y (%)
Area A	6.8	10.5	10.7	11.1	8.3	11.0	13.6	8.6	19.5
Area B	15.5	25.1	16.4	13.5	8.1	6.5	6.9	3.5	4.5

School Results and Highest Level of Qualifications

	Over 16's with 5 or more GCSE grade A*-C or Equivalent (%)	No Formal Qualificat ions (%)	Level 1 (%)	Level 2 (%)	Apprentice ship (%)	Level 3 (%)	Level 4 (%)	Othe r (%)
Area A	13.5	34.6	13.3	13.5	2.7	12.6	17.5	5.9
Area B	15.2	14.6	10.5	15.2	4.6	12.5	39.1	3.6

Green Space

	Total Area of all Land Types (m²)	Total Area of Green Space (m²)	Area of Green Space (%)
Area A	9,003.38	2,800.39	31.1
Area B	6,751.25	4,254.37	63.0